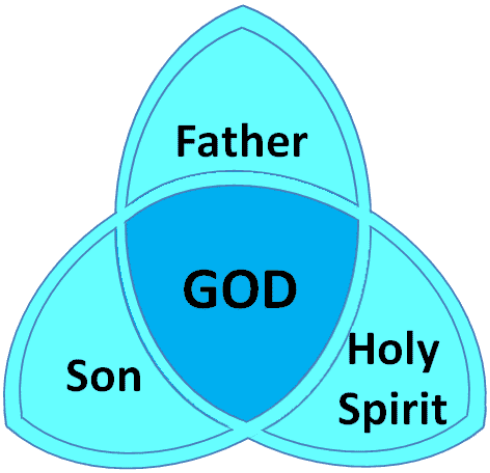
Trinitarianism

(The Triunity of God)

Taught by Pastor Vincent Sawyer



I. Introduction to GOD'S TRIUNE NATURE

The Tri-Unity of God

God being an infinite being is above and beyond man's finite ability to fully comprehend (SEE: p. 46-48).

If His intelligence (Ps. 147:5; Is. 40:28; Rom. 11:34), works (Job 5:9, 9:10), greatness (Ps. 145:3), and judgments and ways (Rom. 11:33-34) cannot be completely understood by mortal man, then certainly His nature or essence cannot be known exhaustively.

Since God's *"greatness is unsearchable"* (Ps. 145:3), our ability to specifically know about Him is dependent upon written revelation. God has not yet revealed everything there is to know about Himself. But one day we will see Him as He is (I Cor. 13:12; I Jn. 3:2). Until then, we must accept by faith the data God has disclosed (Deut. 29:29). Since God's thoughts and ways are infinitely above man's (Is. 55:8-9), the Biblicist will submit His concept of God to that revealed in the sacred pages of Holy Scripture. Regarding truths that are too vast and mysterious for us to logically comprehend, we must accept what the Bible says and go no further. This faith is the essence of Biblical Christianity (Habakkuk 2:4; Heb. 11).

1. Definition of the "Trinity"

a. The Word "Trinity"

The word Trinity never occurs in the Bible (neither does the term "rapture" or the phrase "second coming" - yet these also are doctrines which the Scriptures clearly teach).

The word Trinity is simply a descriptive title which depicts a concept which is clearly taught in Scripture.

The Trinity of God is a doctrine that is fundamental to the Christian faith; belief or disbelief in the Trinity marks orthodoxy from unorthodoxy. Human reason, however, cannot fathom the Trinity, nor can logic explain it, and, although the word itself is not found in the Scriptures, the doctrine is plainly taught in the Scriptures. The early church was forced to study the subject and affirm its truth because of the heretical teaching that arose opposing the Trinity.

A proper definition of the Trinity would be: *The Trinity is composed of three united Persons without separate existence – so completely united as encompassing one God. The divine nature subsists in three distinctions – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

The word Trinity refers to the "tri-unity" of God. God is "three in one." God is three distinct and eternal persons, yet indivisibly one in nature and essence.

The doctrine of the Trinity recognizes that the Bible teaches:

The Father
Son
Holy Spirit

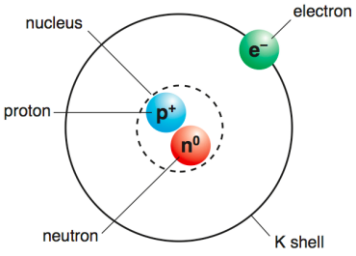
1. **Monotheism** - There is only <u>one</u> God
2. **Tri-Unity** - God exists in <u>three persons</u> (each is personal, not a mere impersonal force)
3. **Unicity** - The three persons of the Godhead are eternally united in <u>one essence</u>

The famous hymn: "<u>Holy, Holy, Holy</u>" recites the three-fold repetition by the Seraphim from Isaiah 6:3. By repeating this adjective the angels show Holiness to be a fundamental attribute of God and hint at the tri-unity of God. "Whom shall <u>I</u> send and who will go for <u>us</u>?" (v.8)

b. Analogies which may help illustrate the Trinity:

1) The <u>Atom</u>

An atom has
1) a proton
2) a neutron
and 3) an electron
Yet it is one atom.



2) A <u>Musical Chord</u>

Three distinct notes may be played on the piano at once, yet they make one sound; and within that one sound are the

3) The <u>Three Leaf Clover</u>

Three distinct leaves yet one clover.



Some have used the illustration of the Egg (which has three parts in one); and Water which can be a solid, liquid, and a gas (though perhaps not all three states at the same time) Though illustrations may be helpful, it is important to note that NO illustration can perfectly illustrate God's Triune nature.

2. Specific References to the Triune God in Scripture, as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are brought together contextually in various texts:

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. (Isaiah 48:16)

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)

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (I Cor. 6:11)

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.
And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.
(1 Cor. 12:4-6)

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;
Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.
(2 Cor. 1:21-22)

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 Cor. 13:14)

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:
That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (Gal. 3:11-14)

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

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. (1 Th. 5:18-19)

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. (1 Pet.1:2)

3. Explanation of the Trinity *(Some insights by Dr. David Burggraff)*

1) God is One in Regard to Essence.

Early in church history the question developed whether Christ was the same as the Father in substance or in essence. Arius taught that Christ was like the Father is substance ("of similar substance," *omoiousios)*, yet the Father was greater than Christ; Athanasius opposed Arius and correctly taught that the Son was of the same substance as the Father (*omoousios*). Although some equated the terms substance and essence, the proper way to designate the Trinity ultimately became "one in essence" (*ousia*).

The essential oneness of God is linked to Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, The Lord is one" (Heb. *echad*, "compound unity; united one"). This statement stresses not only the uniqueness of God but also the unity of God (cf. also James 2:19). It means all three Persons of God possess the summation of the divine attributes but yet the essence of God is undivided. Oneness in essence also emphasizes that the three Persons of the Trinity do not act independently of one another. This was a constant theme of Jesus in rebuffing the charges of the Jews (cf. John 5:19; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10).

2) God is Three with Respect to Persons.

The word *persons* tends to detract from the unity of the Trinity, and it is readily recognized that persons is an inadequate term to describe the relationship within the Trinity.

Some theologians have opted for the term *subsistence*, hence, God has three subsistences. Other words used to describe the distinctiveness of the Three are: distinction, relation, and mode. The term *persons* is nonetheless helpful inasmuch as it emphasizes not only a manifestation but also an individual personality. In suggesting God is three with respect to His Persons it is emphasized that (1) each has the same essence as God and (2) each possess the fullness of God.

In God there are not three individuals alongside of, and separate from, one another, but only personal self-distinctions within the Divine essence. This is an important deviation from modalism (or Sabellianism), which teaches that one God merely manifests Himself in three various ways. This unity within three Persons is seen in OT passages such as Isaiah 48:16 where the Father has sent Messiah and the Spirit to speak to the restored nation. In Isaiah 61:1 the Father has anointed the Messiah with the Spirit for His mission. These references emphasize both the equality and the unity of the three Persons.

In the N.T. John both distinguishes God and the Word and yet shows the Oneness of God and the Word emphasizing the Deity of the Word who became flesh (John 1:1; 14)

3) The Three Persons Have Distinct Relationships.

Within the Trinity exists a relationship that is expressed in terms of subsistence. The Father is not begotten nor does He proceed from any person; the Son is eternally begotten from the Father (John 1:18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9).

The term *generation* suggests the Trinitarian relationship in that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father. The Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son (John 14:26; 16:7). The word *procession* suggests the Trinitarian relationship of the Father and the Son sending the Spirit. It is important to note, however, that these terms denote a *relationship* within the Trinity and do not suggest inferiority in any way. Because the terms can tend to suggest inferiority some theologians deny their usefulness.[1]

Distinction of Persons

a) The Lord is distinguished from the Lord

Then the LORD (Yahweh) rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD (Yahweh) out of heaven; (Gen. 19:24)

But I (Yahweh) will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen. (Hosea 1:7)

[1]Buswell, *Systematic Theology*, 1:111-12, 119-20.

The LORD (Yahweh) said unto my Lord (Adonai), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. (Psalm 110:1)

b) The <u>Redeemer</u> (who must be divine) is distinguished from the Lord

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)

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. (Isaiah 59:20)

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

c) The <u>Spirit</u> is distinguished from the Lord (Is. 48:16; 59:21; 63:9-10). In these verses the Spirit is personal and active.

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. (Isaiah 48:16)

As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever. (Isaiah 59:21)

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. (Isaiah 63:9-10)

4) The Three Persons are Equal.

Although terms like *generation* and *procession* may be used in referring to the functioning within the Trinity, it is important to realize that the three Persons are equal. The Father is recognized as authoritative and supreme (1 Cor. 8:6); the Son is also recognized as equal to the Father in every respect (John 5:21-23; Phil. 2:6); the Spirit is likewise recognized as equal to the Father and the Son (cf. Matt. 12:31).

Their equality is often described as the "*ontological Trinity"*; "Ontology" - The fundamental nature of something's being, reality, or essence.

The fact that the Son placed Himself under the Father and likewise the Spirit under the Son is described as the "*economic Trinity"*. "Economic" – The outworking or function of someone.

Within the Godhead there is equality of essence.
Colossians 2:9 - For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (There is nothing missing in terms of Godness in Jesus; He is totally God)

While there exists Equality of essence, there also exists general differences of function or operation within the Godhead.

For example, regarding our salvation:

- God the Father <u>planned</u> salvation (1 Jn.4:14; Heb.10:7)
- God the Son <u>performed</u> salvation (1 Cor. 15:3; Heb.12:2)
- God the Spirit <u>applies and preserves</u> salvation (Jn.3:6-8; Eph.4:30)

Note: There is often <u>overlap</u> of function taught in Scripture; Thus showing the unicity of the Godhead. Example:
How Jesus was raised from the dead by:
The power of <u>Himself</u> (John 2:19; 10:18)
The power of God, the <u>Father</u> (Gal. 1:1; Rom.10:9)
The power of the <u>Holy Spirit</u> (1 Peter 3:18)

Also, there is "headship" within the Godhead; in other words, there is order within the Godhead.
1 Cor. 11:3 - But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God *(the Father).*
1 Cor. 15:24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

4. Three Heretical Errors to avoid:

a) Tri-theism - "There are three distinct Gods"

In early church history men such as John Ascunages and John Philoponus taught that there were three who were God but they were only related in a loose association as, for example, Peter, James, and John were as disciples. The error of this teaching was that its proponents abandoned the unity within the Trinity with the result that they taught there were three Gods rather than three Persons within one Godhead.

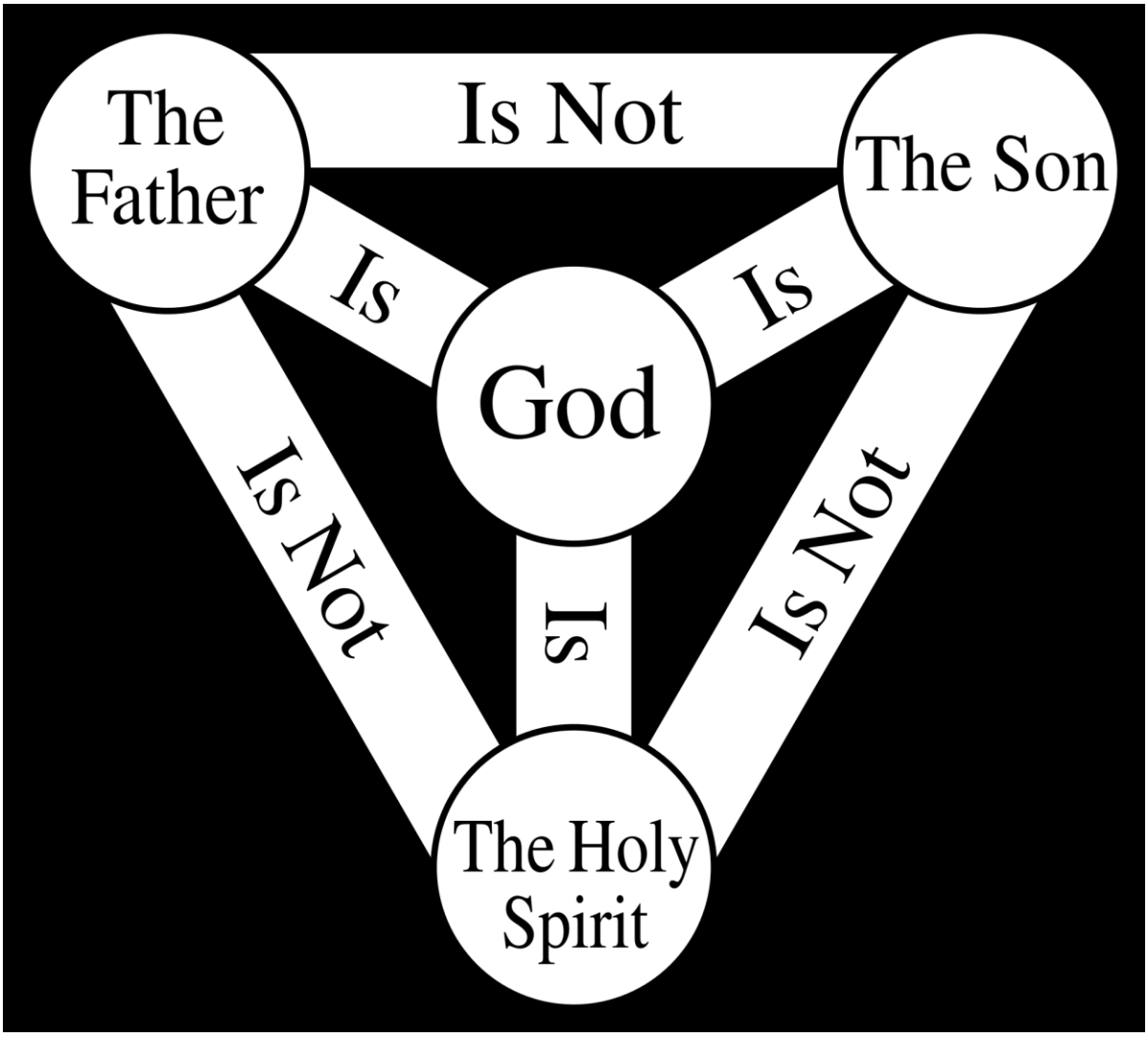
b) Modalism - "There is only one Person in the Godhead who has manifested Himself in three distinct ways (God revealed Himself as the Son, then as the Holy Spirit, but these persons are not distinct).

This teaching, originated by Sabellius (c. A.D. 200), erred in the opposite from that of Tritheism. Although Sabellius spoke of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, he understood all three as simply three modes of existence or three manifestations of one God. The teaching is thus also known as *modalism* because it views one God who variously manifests Himself in three modes of existence: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

c) Arianism (Gnosticism) - "The Father alone is Jehovah God, who created the Son and the Spirit."

Arian doctrine had its roots in Tertullian, who correctly subordinated the Son to the Father. Origen carried Tertullian's concept further by teaching that the Son was subordinate to the Father "in respect to essence." This ultimately led to Arianism, which denied the deity of Christ. Arius taught that only God was the uncreated One; because Christ was begotten of the Father it meant Christ was created by the Father. According to Arius there was a time when Christ did not exist. Arius and his teaching were condemned at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325.

Trinity Illustration



5. Christian History and the "Trinity"

(By Dr. David Burggraff)

Included in this section is a brief overview of the history of the doctrine of the Trinity since much of the Trinitarian discussion had direct bearing on Christology.

A major problem in formulating the doctrine of the Trinity related to the OT monotheistic belief. How could the church recognize the belief that God was one and yet acknowledge the deity of Christ? In its beginning the church had no clear concept of the Trinity, in fact, Christ was variously explained as the mind of God–an impersonal Logos who became personal at the incarnation. Others pictured Him as eternal with the Father yet subordinate to the Father. There was even less understanding concerning the Person of the Holy Spirit. Some understood Him to be subordinate to both the Father and the Son.

1) Monarchianism.

The two issues facing the church concerning the Trinity were maintaining the unity of God on the one hand and affirming the deity of Christ on the other. The early church fathers did not formulate any clear statement concerning the Trinity. Some were unclear about the *Logos*, and most were unconcerned about giving attention to the Spirit except for His work in the lives of believers. In answer to Praxeus, Tertullian (cs. 165-220) asserted the threeness aspect of God, being the first to use the word Trinity. However, he did not have a full and accurate understanding of the Trinity, his views being tinged with subordinationism.

The first heresy connected with the Trinitarian controversy was Monarchianism. Tertullian was battling Monarchians who opted for the unity of God and denied trinitarianism. Monarchianism existed in two forms.

a) *Dynamic Monarchianism (or adoptionism)*.

This was first expounded by Theogotus of Byzantium about 210, and viewed Jesus as a man who was given special power by the Holy Spirit at His baptism. This doctrine was advanced by Theodotus and later by Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch. He taught that the Logos was consubstantial with the Father, but not a distinct Person in the Godhead. He could be identified with God, because He existed in Him just as human reason exists in man. He was merely an impersonal power, present in all men, but particularly operative in the man Jesus. By penetrating the humanity of Jesus progressively, as it did of no other man, this divine power gradually deified it. And because the man Jesus was thus deified, He is worthy of divine honour, though He cannot be regarded as God in the strict sense of the word.[2]

It is clear that although this doctrinal view maintained the oneness of God, the distinctiveness of the three persons within the Godhead was lost.

[2]Berkhof, *History of Christian Doctrines*, p. 78.

b) ***Modalistic Monarchianism*.**

This was more influential and popular, attempting not only to maintain the unity of God but also the full deity of Christ by asserting that the Father became incarnated in the Son. In the West it was known as *Patripassianism* since the incarnated Father also suffered in the Son; and in the East as *Sabellianism* after its most famous representative, Sabellius, who taught that the Persons in the Godhead were modes in which God manifested Himself. Though Sabellius used the word "Person" he meant it as a role or manifestation of the one divine essence.

The designation *modalistic* stressed the idea that God was one God who variously manifested Himself as father, other times as the Son, and other times as the Holy Spirit. Even though modalistic monarchians spoke of three persons, they nonetheless believed that there was but one essence of deity who variously manifested Himself in three different modes. Hence, the Father was born as the Son, the Father died on the cross and the Father also raised Himself from the dead. In fact, Praxeas, the probable originator of modalistic monarchianism, said the Father became His own Son.

2) Arianism.

The most prominent name in the Trinitarian controversy is Arius. Arius (cs. 250-336), an antitrinitarian presbyter of Alexandria, distinguished the one eternal God from the Son who was generated by the Father and who thus had a beginning. To suggest that Christ is eternal would be to affirm two Gods. Arius taught that the Son had a beginning; there was a time when the Son did not exist. The Son was not of the "same substance" (Gk. *homoousios*) as the Father; the Son was created by the Father–that is generated by the Father. He further taught that Christ was created prior to all other creation, He being the medium through which God later created. He also taught that the Holy Spirit was the first thing created by the Son, since all things were made by the Son. As such, Christ is the highest ranking of all created beings, however Christ is subject to change because He is not God. He found scriptural support for his views in passages which seem to picture the Son as inferior to the Father (Mt. 28:18; Mk. 13:32; I Cor. 15:28).
Arius was opposed by the highly capable Athanasius of Alexandria (cs. 296-373) who, while maintaining the unity of God, distinguished three essential natures in God and insisted that the Son was of the same substance as the Father. He taught that the Son was generated, but that this was an eternal and internal act of God in contrast to Arius who rejected eternal generation.

When the **Council of Nicea** (A.D. 325) convened to attempt to settle the dispute Athanasius and his followers wanted it stated that the Son was of the same substance (*homoousios*) as the Father, while a large group of moderates suggested that the word *omoiousios* ("of similar substance") be substituted. Thorough-going Arians said that the Son was a different substance (*heteroousios*). Emperor Constantine finally sided with the Athanasian party resulting in the clear and unequivacal statement of the Nicene Creed that Christ was of the same substance with the Father (*homoousios*). It reads:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance [*ousias*] of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance [*homoousion*] with the Father, through whom all things came to be, those things that are in heaven and those things that are on earth, who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh, and was made man, suffered, rose the third day, ascended into the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead.

The designation *homoousion* stressed that Christ is not merely like the Father but He is of the identical substance as the Father. The terms "God from God" and "true God from true God" further stressed the deity of Christ. At the same time "begotten, not made" and "came down" stressed His eternality.

Concerning the Holy Spirit the Creed merely said, "I believe in the Holy Spirit." However, Athanasius himself, in his own teaching maintained that the Spirit, like the Son, was of the same essence as the Father. In the aftermath of the Council of Nicea many documents were circulated in the fourth century and the Arian party was popular partly because of the influence of Constantius, Constantine's successor, who was fond of Arius. The controversy continued, with the center of controversy revolving around the term *homoousian*, a term to which many objected. As the controversy shifted back and forth, both Arius and Athanasius found themselves banished at different times. The West favored Athanasius' view, whereas the East wanted a modified statement.

In the second half of the fourth century three theologians from the province of Cappadocia in eastern Asia minor gave definitive shape to the doctrine of the Trinity and defeated Arianism. They were Basil of Caesarea, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and Basil's close friend Gregory of Nazianzus. They helped clarify the vocabulary concerning the Trinity by using *ousia* for the one essence of the Godhead and *hypostasis* for the Persons. Their emphasis on the three essential natures in the one God freed the Nicene Creed from suspicions of Sabellianism in the eyes of the moderates. They also vigorously maintained the *homoousios* of the Holy Spirit.

3) The Council of Constantinople (381).

In 373 a group led by Eustath called the Pneumatomachians ("fighters against the Spirit") regarded both the Son and the Spirit merely of like substance with the Father (some moderates did affirm the consubstantiality of the Son). The controversy grew to such proportions consubstantiality of the Son). The controversy grew to such proportions that Emperor Theodosius called a council as Constantinople consisting of 150 orthodox bishops who represented the Eastern church. Under the guidance of Gregory of Nazianzus the council formulated this statement concerning the Holy Spirit: "And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-giving, who proceeds from the Father, who is to be glorified with the Father and the Son, and who speaks through the prophets." Though the creed avoided the term "of the same substance" which had been used of Christ in the Nicene Creed, it described the work of the Spirit in terms which could not be predicted of any created being. Thus it settled the question of the deity of the Spirit, though it was less than a fully satisfactory statement since it did not use *omoousios* of the Spirit and did not define the relationship of the Spirit to the other two Persons.

4) Augustine (354-430).

a) *De Trinitate*.

The statement of the Trinity in the Western church reached a final formulation in this work by Augustine. In this treatise he stated that each of the three Persons of the Trinity possesses the entire essence and that all are interdependent on the others. Though he was dissatisfied with the word "Persons" to denote the three essential natures, he used it "in order not to be silent." He also taught that the Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son.

b) *The Pelagian controversy (431)*.

Augustine also laid great stress on efficacious grace as the work of the Spirit. This profoundly influenced not only his doctrine of man and of sin but also his doctrine of the Spirit.

c) The Synod of Toledo (589).

While Western theologians generally held to the procession of the Holy Spirit from both the Father and Son, this was not formalized until the *filioque* ("and Son"0 clause was added to the Constantinople Creed at the Synod of Toledo. The Eastern church never accepted this, declaring it to be heresy, splitting the two groups even to today. Photius, patriarch of Constantinople and adversary of Pope Nicholas of Rome, used the *filioque* clause as part of his effort to discredit Nicholas' claims as universal bishop. He charged the Western church with introducing doctrinal innovations claiming that *filioque* had falsified the holy creed of Constantinople.

d) Reformation teaching on the Trinity.

The reformers and all Reformation Confessions express the doctrine of the Trinity in the orthodox fashion formulated in the early church (see Calvin, *Institutes*, I. 13, for example). Calvin seemed to find the idea of the eternal generation of the Son difficult, if not useless, though he did not deny it.

Luther accepted the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity because he felt it was taught in the Scriptures though he felt that faith alone could comprehend it. The Augsburg Confession (1530) clearly declares "that there is one divine essence which is called and is God . . . yet there are three Persons of the same essence and power, who also are coeternal, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost" (III.7). Likewise the *Westminster Confession* (1647) states: "In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding: the Son is eternally begotten of the Father: the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son" (II. 3).

Socinianism in the sixteenth century denied the preexistence of the Son, considering Him only a man. It taught that there was only one divine essence containing only one Person. These views influenced English Unitarianism and English Deism. Many Unitarians were not Deists but all Deists had a unitarian concept of God. The heretical lineage was Arianism to Socinianism to Unitarianism to Deism, American Unitarianism was a direct descendant of English Unitarianism.

e) Modern views.

The orthodox view of the Trinity was and is held by many in the modern period. However there have been many impugners. Kant and Hegel opposed the orthodox teaching and held to adoptionism or impersonal pantheism. Swedenborg and Schleiermacher echoed Sabellianism. Many feel that Barth's concept was modalistic (Leonard Hodgson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity* [London: Nisbet, 1955], p. 229). Others defend him as orthodox because he rejected Sabellianism and used his concept of "modes of being" in God in place of the concept of Persons. Paul Tillich felt that the doctrine of the Trinity was produced by man to meet his own needs. Tillich in reality did not believe there was even on Person in the Godhead, let alone three. Jehovah's Witnesses espouse an Arian-like Christology by denying the eternality of the Son and the doctrine of the Trinity. They, like Arius, see the *Logos* as an intermediate being between the Creator and creation.

6. Anti-Trinitarianists *(Past & Present)*

Those who reject the doctrine of the Trinity include Jews, Muslims, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

1) Judaism's View of God

Judaism is a monotheistic religion, believing in only one true, omniscient, omnipotent, sovereign and living God who alone created and to this day sustains the universe. The key text of Judaism is found in Deuteronomy 6:4 and is called the Shema (meaning to "hear"). "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD" - *Deuteronomy 6:4*

Note: The Hebrew word translated "one" in Deuteronomy 6:4 is "Echad" which allows for a plurality in oneness. For example Echad is used of two being one in the bond of marriage (Genesis 2:24) and Echad is used of one cluster of multiple grapes (Numbers 13:23). Another Hebrew word "Yachid" means only one (no plurality) as in Zechariah 12:10.

Judaism rejects the concept of the trinity and holds that God's proper name is YHWH (Yahweh or Jehovah).

2) Islam's View of God

Muslims believe in the existence of only one God (named "Allah" which means "the God"). Monotheism.
"O People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we do not erect, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah." (Surah 3:64)

They reject the notion of the Trinity or that God has a "Son"
"They (Christians) say: (Allah) Most Gracious has begotten a son!" Indeed you have put forth a thing most monstrous!...For it is not consonant with the majesty of (Allah) Most Gracious that He should beget a son." (Surah 19: 88,89,92)

3) Jehovah's Witnesses View of God

J.W.'s deny Christ's deity
(They say he is "a god," not Jehovah God)
"...The Bible shows that there is only one God...greater than His Son. ... And that the Son, as the First-born, Only-begotten and 'the creation by God,' had a beginning. That the Father is greater and older than the Son is reasonable, easy to understand and is what the Bible teaches."
("Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained" - p. 164)

II. The Bible's Teaching regarding the Doctrine of the Trinity

What Is Our Authority for believing the doctrine of the Trinity?

- The believer's authority is not what councils, synods or man's decrees determine.
- The believer's authority is not human logic or reason.
- The believer's authority is not man-made traditions.
- The believer's authority is not existential experiences, visions, dreams or supposed new revelations.
- The believer's authority is not what a church, denomination, or influential church leader decides.

The Believer's Authority is exclusively God's Word, The Bible!
(Isaiah 8:20; Matthew 4:4; John 5:39; John 17:17; 1 Cor.15:3-4; Acts 18:28 etc.)

The doctrine of the Trinity is <u>not</u> exhaustively and fully taught in any <u>one</u> verse of Scripture, but is a doctrine that is clearly understood by an honest evaluation of all texts which speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and their relationships to each other.

1. The Old Testament makes many intimations of the Triune Nature of God

a. The name "Elohim" in the Old Testament
"In the beginning <u>God</u> (Elohim) created the Heavens and the Earth" (Gen. 1:1).
(The word "Elohim" which occurs some 2,570 times in the Old Testament is a <u>plural</u> name for the one and true God)

b. God uses <u>plural pronouns</u> in speaking of Himself throughout the Old Testament

- *"Let <u>us</u> make man in <u>our</u> image, according to <u>our</u> likeness"* (Gen. 1:26).
- *"Behold the man has become like one of <u>us</u>, to know good and evil"* (Gen. 3:22)
- *"Let <u>us</u> go down. . ."* (Gen. 11:7)
- *"Whom shall <u>I</u> send and who will go for <u>us</u>"* (Is. 6:8)

3. The Pre-incarnate Son of God - Jesus Christ - made these statements in the Old Testament

- Isaiah 48:16 - *"Come near unto me, hear 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."*
- *"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me (Jesus Christ). . ."* (Is. 61:1; cp. Lk. 4:18-19)

4. Jehovah God is distinguished from Himself in the Old Testament (The Father and the Son)

- Gen. 19:24 - *"Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven."*
- 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."*

Compare Psalm 45:6-7 with Hebrews 1:8.

2. The New Testament makes many Intimations of the Triune Nature of God

a. The Baptismal formula indicates Triunity

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name (singular) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19).

If Jesus were not deity, it would have been "the worst form of blasphemy for the Lord Jesus to use His own name and that of the Holy Spirit along with that of the Father if they were not co-equal with Him." (Richard DeHaan).

b. The Believers' Access to God indicates Triunity

"For through Him (jesus) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephes. 2:18)

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father." (Gal. 4:6)

c. Paul's benediction indicates Triunity

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen." (II Cor. 13:14)

3. The Bible explicitly teaches the Triune Nature of God

a. The Bible clearly teaches that only one God exists (this doctrine is called "Monotheism").

God is one divine essence.
"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4)
(cp. Deut. 4:35, 39)

- *". . . beside me there is no God"* (Is. 44:6)
- *". . . Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any"* (Is. 44:8)
- *"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me. . ."* (Is. 45:5)
- *". . . There is none beside Me. I am the LORD, and there is none else"* (Is. 45:6).
- SEE: Isaiah 43:11, 45:21-22

b. The Bible clearly teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are "God."

- The Father is called God (John 16:27)
- The Son is called God (Jn. 1:1; I Jn. 5:20; Rev. 21:7; Jn. 20:28; Heb. 1:8; Acts 20:28; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:15; Col. 2:9; I Tim. 3:16; Titus 2:13; Mt. 1:23; Is. 9:6).
- The Holy Spirit is called God (Acts 5:3-4; cp. Is. 6:9 with Acts 28:25; cp. Jer. 31:31-34 with Heb. 10:15-17).

c. The Bible clearly teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are eternal

- The Father is eternal (Ps. 90:2)
- The Son is eternal (Is. 9:6; Col. 1:17)
- The Spirit is eternal (Heb. 9:14)

d. The Bible clearly teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share the same <u>attributes</u>

	THE FATHER	THE SON	HOLY SPIRIT
OMNIPOTENCE	Rev. 19:6; Gen. 18:14, 17:1; Mt. 19:26; Jer. 10:12, 32:17; Rom. 1:20; Job 42:1-2	Mk. 2:10; Mt. 28:18; Jn. 1:12; Jn. 14:13-14; Is. 9:6	Rom. 15:13, 15:9 Lk. 1:35 Micah 3:8
OMNISCIENCE	Job 42:2; Ps. 147:5, 139:15; Is. 40:28; Dan. 2:20-22; I Ki. 8:39	Jn. 2:24, 16:30; Jn. 21:17; Col. 2:3; Mt. 9:4, 17:27; Jn. 11:14; Rev. 2:23	Is. 40:13-14; Jn. 14:26; 16:12-13; I Cor. 2:10
OMNIPRESENCE	Ps. 139:7-11, 15, 16; I Ki. 8:27; Acts 7:49; II Chron. 2:5-6; Jer. 23:24	Jn. 1:47-50; Mt. 18:20; Mt. 28:18-20	Psalm 139:7-10
ETERNALITY	Gen. 21:33; Rom. 1:20; Deut. 33:27; Rom. 16:26	Heb. 13:8; Jn. 8:58; 17:5; Col. 1:17; Rev. 21:6; Is. 9:6	Heb. 9:14; Gen. 1:2

e. The Bible clearly teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all involved in the same <u>works</u>.

1) <u>Creation</u>
   a) The Father created (Gen. 1:1)
   b) The Son created (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:15-16; Heb. 1:2)
   c) The Spirit created (Job 33:4)

2) <u>Salvation</u>
   a) The Father <u>planned</u> it (Eph. 1:4-6; Gal. 4:4)
   b) The Son <u>provided</u> it (Eph. 1:7-12; Gal. 4:5)
   c) The Spirit <u>preserves</u> it (Eph. 1:13-14; Gal. 4:6)

3) <u>Answered Prayer</u>
   We are to pray:
   a) <u>To</u> the Father (mt. 6:9)
   b) <u>Through</u> the Son (I Tim. 2:5; Jn. 14:14)
   c) <u>In</u> the Spirit (Jude 20; Eph. 6:18)

Note: **The Bible teaches that everything God does, He does through the instrumentality of "His Arm" (Is. 53:1; Joh 12:38) His "Arm" is His Son, Jesus the Messiah.** These are just a few of the works God does via His Son:

- Creation (Col. 1:15)
- Sustaining Creation (Col. 1:17)
- Providing for O.T. Israel (1 Cor. 10:4) & the N.T. Believer (Phil. 4:19)
- Providing Redemption (Is. 44:6) and Saving Mankind (Acts 4:12)
- Judging Mankind (John 5:22)
- Revealing Himself (John 1:18)
- Ruling (Acts 17:31)

f. The Bible clearly teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct from each other.

1) The Father is distinct from the Son
(Jn. 5:36-37; Gal. 4:4; Jn. 17:1)

2) The Father and Son are distinct from the Spirit
(Jn. 14:16, 17; 15:26)

3) Examples of the distinctiveness:
   a) At the Lord's baptism, the Son came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended like a dove, and the Father spoke audibly from Heaven (Mt. 3:16-17)
   b) Both Jesus and the Father sent the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:16, 16:7)

g. The Bible clearly teaches that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one in nature and essence.

1) The Father and Son are one.

- *"I and my Father are one"* (Jn. 10:30)
- *". . . equal with God"* (Jn. 5:18)
- *"All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father"* (Jn. 5:23)
- *". . . He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"* (Jn. 14:9)
- *"I am in the Father, and the Father in me"* Jn. 14:10, 11)
- *". . . we are one. . ."* (Jn. 17:22)
- *"Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God"* (Phil. 2:6)

2) The Father and Spirit are one.

- *"Ye are the temple of God; and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you"* (I Cor. 3:16; cp. I Cor. 6:19).
- *"The Lord is that Spirit"* (II Cor. 3:17)
- Believers are *"an habitation (dwelling place) of God through the Spirit"* (Eph. 2:22)
- The Holy Spirit's names show His oneness with the Father:
  "The Spirit of your Father" (Mt. 10:20; Acts 1:4)
  "The Spirit of the Lord" (Lk. 4:18)
  "The Spirit of God" (Mt. 3:16; I Cor. 6:11; I Pet. 4:14)

3) The Son and Spirit are one.

- *"But ye are no 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."* (Rom. 8:9)
- *"I will send you another comforter"* [lit. another of the same kind] (Jn. 14:16)
- The Holy Spirit's names show His oneness with the Son:
  "The Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9)
  "The Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:9; Acts 16:7)
  "The Spirit of His (God's) Son" (Gal. 4:6)

4) The Father, Son, and Spirit are one
SEE: John 14:16, 18, 23

4. The Doctrine of the Trinity is the Basis of All Christian Doctrine

a) If there is no plurality in the Godhead, Christ cannot be God.

b) If Christ is not God, He could not die for the sins of the world and reconcile man to God (His sacrifice would not be infinite).

c) If Christ is not God, He cannot be the Savior of the world (Is. 43:11; Acts 4:12).

d) Anyone who rejects the doctrine that Jesus is God has *"another Jesus"* (II Cor. 11:4), is following *"another Spirit"* (II Cor. 1:4), is believing *"another Gospel"* (Gal. 1:8), and will die in their sins (John 8:24).

III. Christ and the Trinity

The Bible Teaches that Jesus Christ is God (Deity)

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

The Bible teaches that Christ is divine, equal with the Father, God very God, and Lord of Lords!

A. Jesus is Directly Called "God."

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Mt. 1:23).

1. He is called God by John.

- John 1:1 - "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (the "Word" refers to Jesus - v. 14).
- I Jn. 5:20 - "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."
- Rev. 21:7 - "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

2. He is called God by Thomas.

Jn. 20:27-29 - "...and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus said, Because ye have seen me, thou hast believed..."

If Thomas erred so seriously in addressing Jesus as God, why was there no correction by Jesus? And why did Jesus commend his faith?

3. Jesus refers to Himself as God.

- John 5:17-18 - "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."

- John 10:30 - "I and my Father are one." [Note the reaction of the Jews (v. 33) - "...Thou, being a man, makest thyself God." jesus shortly after this said, "...that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me,a nd I in him. Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand" (v. 38, 39).
- John 14:9 - "...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father..."

4. He is called God by the writer of Hebrews.

Heb. 1:3 - "His Son...who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person..."

5. He is called God by God the Father.

Heb. 1:8 - "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom." (quoting Ps. 45:6, 7)

6. He is called God by the Apostle Paul.

"Israelites...whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all God blessed for ever. Amen." (Rom.9:5)

Acts 20:28 (Luke quoting Paul) - "...Feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood."

Phil. 2:6 - "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

- Col. 1:15 - "Who is the image of the invisible God."
- Col. 2:9 - "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." ("fullness" = completeness or perfection; "Godhead" = to have the same essence as God)
- I Tim. 3:16 - "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."
- Titus 2:13 - "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." (cp. I Jn. 5:20; Rev. 21:7; Is. 9:6)

B. Jesus has the Divine Titles of God.

1. "Son of God" -
   The word "Son" refers to identity (See page 29 in the notes).
   Christ is identified with God because He has the same nature.
   To be the "only begotten Son" (Jn. 3:16) means to have a unique relationship to the Father that no one else has or ever will have.

2. "God"
   Jn. 1:1, 20:27-29; Rom. 9:5; I Tim. 3:16; Titus 2:13, Heb. 1:8; I Jn. 5:20; etc.

3. "Lord"
   Such a title identifies Christ with Adonai and Yahweh of the Old Testament (Jn. 13:13, 20:28; Acts 4:33; Rom. 10:9; Rev. 17:14; cp. Jn. 12:41 with Is. 6:5).

4. "God with us"
   Mt. 1:23; Is. 7:14.

5. "The Holy One"
   Acts 3:14; Is. 6:1-3, 10:20.

6. "First and Last"
   Is. 44:6; Rev. 22:13.

7. "Savior"
   Is. 43:11; Titus 2:13.

C. Jesus Claimed and Exercised the Prerogatives of God.

(Christ had the rights of God, and did the works of God.)

1. Forgives sins (Mk. 2:10; Lk. 7:48)

2. Raises the dead (Lk. 7:12-15; Jn. 5:25, 29; 6:39-44; 11:24, 25).

3. Controls nature (Mt. 8:26).

4. Judges motives (Mt. 7:22-27).

5. Receives worship (Ps. 2:8, 12; Mt. 8:2, 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 28:9, 17; Jn. 9:35, 38; 20:28, 29; Lk. 24:51, 52; by angels - Heb. 1:6; by all men - Phil. 2:10.
   [Note: Peter (Acts 10:25, 26), Paul (Acts 14:11-18) and angels (Rev. 19:10 refused to be worshipped.]

6. Taught with independent authority (Mt. 7:29).
   Jesus did not say, "Thus saith the Lord" as the prophets did, but boldly states, "I say unto you" (cp. Mt. 5).

7. Sends the Holy Spirit (Jn. 15:26).

8. Creates (Gen. 1:26; Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:15, 16; Heb.1:2).

   Note: "Firstborn" (Col. 1:15) is a Jewish concept which refers to preeminence or authority, not origin (cp. Col. 1:18 - EX: Jacob & Esau). Jesus had the rights of the firstborn. Cp. Jn. 3:16 - "only begotten" - lit. "one of a kind"; "unique"; not referring to origin. Cp. Heb. 11:17 - Isaac was not Abraham's only son. Cp. Acts 13:33 - reference to the resurrection.

9. Sustains (He preserves creation) (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).

10. He is the only Judge (cp. Jn. 5:22 with Rev. 20:11).

11. He is to receive equal honor with the Father (Jn. 5:23).

12. The only Savior (cp. Is. 43:11 with Jude 25; I Pet. 3:18).

13. He grants eternal life (Jn. 10:28).

14. He answers prayer (Jn. 14:14).

[If Jesus was not God He could not forgive sins, be worshipped, be savior etc.]

D. Jesus Christ has the Same Attributes as God.

1. Self-existence (Jn. 8:58 - "I am"; Jn. 1:14, 14:6).
2. Immutability (Heb. 13:8 - "The same...for ever")
3. Eternal (Rev. 22:13 - "Alpha & Omega"; cp. Is. 44:6; Jn. 8:35).
4. Omnipresent (Mt. 28:20 - "I am with you always"; cp. 18:20).
5. Omniscient (Jn. 21:17 - "Lord, thou knowest all things"; cp. Jn. 1:48, 2:24, 4:18, 29).
6. Omnipotent (Rev. 1:8 - "Almighty"; Jn.1:12, 4:19-21; Phil. 3:21, 21).
7. Life (Jn. 1:4 - "In Him was life").
8. Truth (Jn. 14:6 - "I am the truth").
9. Infinity (meaning no limits or boundaries except those that are self-imposed) (Eph. 3:8 - "unsearchable"; cp. Col. 2:3).
10. Perfection (Col. 2:9 - "fullness of the Godhead"; Eph. 4:13).
11. Omnisapience (I Cor. 1:24 - "the wisdom of God").

E. Jesus Christ <u>Fulfills Old Testament Scriptures</u> which Apply to Jehovah God.

The following parallels between the Old Testament and New Testament prove that Jesus is Jehovah:

1. "Creator"
   - Jehovah is Creator (Is. 44:24; Prov. 16:4; cp. Gen. 1:26, 27).
   - Jesus is Creator (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16).

2. "First and Last"
   - Jehovah is the First and the Last (Is. 44:6).
   - Jesus is the First and the Last (Rev. 1:8, 17, 18; 22:12, 13).

3. "Highest Glory"
   - Jehovah has the highest glory (Is. 42:8).
   - Jesus has the highest glory (Jn. 17:5; II Pet. 3:18).

4. "Forgiver"
   - Jehovah alone can forgive sin (Is. 43:25).
   - Jesus forgives sin (Mk. 2:7-10).

5. "Holy One"
   - Jehovah is the Holy One (Is. 43:3, 14).
   - Jesus is the Holy One (Acts 3:14).

6. "The One coming"
   - Jehovah is coming with His reward (Is. 40:10).
   - Jesus is coming with His reward (Rev. 22:12).

7. "Shepherd"
   - Jehovah is the Shepherd (Ps. 23:1).
   - Jesus is the Shepherd (Jn. 10; Heb. 13:20, 21; II Pet. 5:4).

8. "King"
   - Jehovah is King (Zech. 14:9).
   - Jesus is King (Rev. 19:16).

9. "I Am"
   - Jehovah is the "I Am" (Ex. 3:14).
   - Jesus is the "I Am" (Jn. 8:58, 59; 18:5-8).

10. "Worshipped and Served"
    - Jehovah is the One to be worshipped and served (Deut. 6:5).
    - Jesus is the One to be worshipped and served (Mt. 14:33; Jn. 9:38; Heb. 1:6; Ro. 1:1; Ja. 1:1).

11. "One God"
    - Jehovah is the only true god (Is. 43:10).
    - Jesus is the true God (I Jn. 5:20).

12. "The only Savior"
    - Jehovah is the only Savior (Is. 43:11).
    - Jesus is the only Savior (Mt. 1:21; Acts 4:12; Titus 1:3, 4).

13. "The Changeless One"
    - Jehovah is the Changeless One (Mal. 3:6).
    - Jesus is the Changeless One (Heb. 13:8).

14. "The One to be loved"
    - Jehovah is the One to be loved (Deut. 6:5).
    - Jesus is the One to be loved (I Cor. 16:22).

15. "The One Lord"
    - Jehovah is the one Lord (Zech. 14:9).
    - Jesus is the one Lord (I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:5).

16. "The Redeemer"
    - Jehovah is the Redeemer (Is. 49:26).
    - Jesus is the Redeemer (Titus 2:13, 14).

17. "The Fountain of life and light"
    - Jehovah is the Fountain of life and light (Ps. 36:9).
    - Jesus is the Fountain of life and light (Jn. 1:4; 4:14).

18. "The One who refreshes the thirsty"
    - Jehovah is the One who refreshes the thirsty (Is. 44:3).
    - Jesus is the One who refreshes the thirsty (Jn. 7:37, 38).

19. "The One who swallows up death"
    - Jehovah is the One who swallows up death (Is. 25:8).
    - Jesus is the One who swallows up death (II Tim. 1:10).

20. "The One to be looked to for salvation"
    - Jehovah is the One to be looked to for salvation (Is. 45:22).
    - Jesus is the One to be looked to for salvation (Jn. 6:40, 1:29).

21. "The Holy Lord of Glory"
    - Jehovah is the Holy Lord of Glory (Is. 6:1, 3, 10).
    - Jesus is the Holy Lord of Glory (Jn. 12:37-41 *v.41).

22. "The Light of New Jerusalem"
    - Jehovah is the Light of New Jerusalem (Is. 60:19).
    - Jesus is the Light of New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:23).

23. "The only One to be prayed to"
    - Jehovah is the One to be prayed to (Mt. 6:9; cp. Is. 45:20; 44:17, 18).
    - Jesus is the One to be prayed to (Jn. 14:14; Acts 7:59-60).

24. "The One who calms the sea"
    - Jehovah is the One who calms the Sea (Ps. 107:29).
    - Jesus is the One who calms the Sea (Mt. 8:26).

25. "The One who cleanses sin"
    - Jehovah is the One who cleanses sin (Is. 43:25).
    - Jesus is the One who cleanses sin (I Jn. 1:7).

26. "The One who chastens (disciplines)"
    - Jehovah is the One who chastens (Prov. 3:12).
    - Jesus is the One who chastens (Rev. 3:19).

27. "The Rock"
    - Jehovah is the Rock (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 78:19, 20, 35).
    - Jesus is the Rock (I Pet. 2:6-8; Acts 4:11, 12; I Cor. 10:4).
      Compare: Exod. 17:5-6 with I Cor.10:4.

28. "The Judge of the Earth"
    - Jehovah is the Judge of the earth (Gen. 18:25).
    - Jesus is the Judge of the earth (II Cor. 5:10).

29. "The One whom Israel tempted (tested) in the wilderness"
    - Jehovah was tested by Israel (Num.21:5-7)
    - Jesus was tested by Israel (I Cor.10:9)

The list of parallels on the previous pages is by no means exhaustive. Many more can be discovered. The parallels between Jehovah of the Old Testament and Jesus of the New Testament clearly identify Jesus with Jehovah! Jesus is Jehovah! No wonder He will one day be called "The LORD (Jehovah) our Righteousness" (Jer. 23:6).

NOTE: By calling Jesus Jehovah, we are not denying the fact that the Father is Jehovah and that the Holy Spirit is Jehovah. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are together the eternal Jehovah God, as the Scriptures clearly teach.

If Jesus were not Jehovah, the Bible would be the most contradictory Book ever written. But the truth is, the Bible is not a contradictory Book, because Jesus is Jehovah God!

The evidence for Jesus' deity is conclusive. Those who deny it dishonor the Father (Jn. 5:23) and face eternal tragedy (Jn. 8:24).

F. Christ's eternal nature and deity are manifested by the fact that He appears throughout the O.T. as Yahweh and Adonai.

Not only did Christ pre-exist before all living creatures, but at certain times, He chose to visibly manifest Himself (even prior to His incarnation) in the form of Christophonies (or appearances of Christ). These appearances describe Him often as the "Messenger of Yahweh" and as "Yahweh" Himself.

Jesus is the revealer of God:
Christ mysteriously appears in the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures:

All Old Testament references to someone seeing "God" (Elohim) or "the LORD" (Jehovah), must refer to God the Son.
Why? The reason is simple. The Bible states that no one (that is, no mortal human being) has ever seen God the Father (Ex. 33:20; Jn. 1:18, 6:46).

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.
"declared" - εξηγεομαι (exegeomai) – We derive our term "exegesis" from this word. Exegesis is the science of unmining the hidden gems of Scripture and leading these truths out of the Sacred Text so that we can understand the deep things of God.

Such appearances of Christ are specifically called "Christophanies" or appearances of Christ.

In an excellent book: "Christ in the Old Testament" by James A. Borland, page 33-34, it is observed that these appearances of Christ were:

1) **Actual Occurrences** (Not imaginary, hallucinatory experiences)
2) **Initiated by God** (He revealed Himself as He willed; Not at the whims & wishes of people)
3) **Revelatory** (Each served a purpose of giving promises, warnings, or instruction.
4) **For individuals** rather than for multitudes.
5) **Intermittent** (no predictability)
6) **Temporal** (transitory and fleeting, often lasting for only a few minutes; Unlike Christ's incarnation when He became a man for 33 ½ years)
7) **Audible and visible** (Not people "seeing and hearing things" in the recesses of their own mind, but actual appearances perceptible to conscious, thinking people)

1. Christ is the Creator of everything!

The References to Plurality in the Creation Account must be reconciled with the claim that God alone Created all things.

Isaiah 44:24 "Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, **I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself"**

Several different N.T. writers give the answer to the mystery of the creation account:

a. The Testimony of John

John 1:1-3 - 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. **All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made**.

b. The Testimony of the writer of Hebrews

Heb. 1:2 – God…Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, **by whom also he made the worlds**;

c. The Testimony of the Apostle Paul

Col. 1:15-16 - Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: **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.

2. Christ is the O.T. Revealer of God, The Father

John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

3. Christ is testified about in the Hebrew Scriptures

John 5:39 - Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

4. Christ is written about by Moses in the Pentateuch

John 5:46 - For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

5. Christ Was Seen by Abraham

John 8:56 - Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

6. Christ was Prophesied by Isaiah

John 12:38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

7. Christ was Seen by Isaiah

John 12:41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him. (Cp. Isaiah 6)

G. The Bible Teaches that Jesus Christ is God (Deity), who <u>became man</u> (incarnate).

Hebrews 2:9 - But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

The <u>MYSTERY</u> of the Incarnation (Humiliation: Kenosis)

Question: How could the eternal God take upon Himself human limitations while retaining His eternal deity? If Jesus is God how could He appear to have the limitations as described in Mark 13:32 (omniscience) and John 14:28 (omnipresence).

<u>False</u> answers:

1. Christ only <u>appeared</u> limited (His divine and infinite powers were simply veiled from human view)
   This teaching leads to heresy called "Docetism" which teaches that Jesus only appeared to be man.

2. Christ <u>surrendered</u> His <u>attributes</u> while on earth.
   NO! He could not surrender His holiness; His righteousness; His truthfulness; His love, etc.

3. Christ surrendered His <u>deity</u> while on earth.
   NO! If that was the case, He would have been less than an infinite sacrifice.

<u>Biblical</u> answer:

"Christ voluntarily surrendered the independent exercise of certain of His divine attributes while He was on earth."

1. The <u>Self-Emptying</u> of Christ

a. The Mystery of mysteries involves the eternal Creator of the universe, who had all power, all authority, and all honor; and yet humbled Himself so low in order to become man and take upon Himself man's limitations (SEE I Tim. 3:16).

b. Philippians 2:5-8 describes the self-emptying ("kenosis") of Christ.
   The word "kenosis" comes from the Greek word "kenoo" (Phil. 2:7), which means "<u>to empty</u>."

c. The doctrine of Christ's Kenosis (self-emptying) is succinctly stated as follows: ***"Christ voluntarily surrendered the independent exercise of certain of His divine attributes while He was on earth."***

d. Note concerning this statement:

1) Christ was and is fully equal with God the Father (v. 6) (cp. John 5:18, 10:30).

"Form" = Christ has the same nature or essence as God (Vines,p. 123).
Compare: "Form of God" (v. 6) with "Form of a servant" (v. 7).
When Jesus became man, He had the nature of a servant in the same sense that He had the nature of God.

2) Though equal with God, Christ humbled Himself voluntarily (v.7)

"Made Himself" (emptied Himself)
"Took upon Him"
No one forced Christ to become such a lowly servant, and no one deserved such an act of humiliation.
Christ emptied Himself to become human because He desired to fulfill the work that could only be accomplished by a human (SEE Heb 2:14-18)

3) Christ did not empty Himself of His deity, but rather He emptied Himself of the display of His deity.

He deserved the recognition of God, yet "He made Himself of no reputation" in the eyes of men.
The most dramatic result of Christ becoming man is that through He was God, He would no longer be immediately recognized or honored as God by men.

4) Christ did not surrender any attribute, but rather the independent use of certain attributes.

In the Kenosis, Jesus the Son became perfectly subservient to the Father (John 8:28, 29; Heb. 10:7) and perfectly dependent upon the Spirit (Acts 1:2; Heb. 9:14).

5) Christ only surrendered the use of certain divine attributes. Jesus never surrendered an attribute of His inner nature or character (EX: holiness, righteousness, truthfulness, faithfulness, love, mercy, grace, patience).

Jesus did surrender the independent use of His attributes of ability to the leading and will of the Father.

EX: the ability to do all (omnipotence; Mt. 28:19)
the ability to know all (omniscience; Mk. 13:32)
the ability to decide all (omnisapience; Lk. 2:52)
the ability to be everywhere (omnipresence; Jn. 14:28)

Christ surrendered the use of His "omnirelative" attributes, not His "immanent" attributes.

6) Christ's self-emptying was limited to the time He was on earth before His resurrection and glorification.

Today, Christ has all authority (Mt. 28:19) and all glory (Jn. 17:5) and full exercise of all of His "omnirelative" attributes (Rev. 1:13-18; 5:12, 13)

2. The Humanity of Christ

a. A second mystery of the incarnation involves how Christ (being eternal God) could become totally and completely human.

b. When Jesus became incarnate, He took upon Himself a genuine human nature.

NOTE: Although Christ became total man, He did not become sinful man. He had a human nature but not a sin nature (Heb. 4:15, 7:26; II Cor. 5:21; I Pet. 2:22).

He had the identical nature which Adam had before the fall. Christ is called "the last Adam"
(I Cor. 15:45).

c. Scriptural evidences of Christ's humanity:

1) Christ possessed the essential elements of human nature.
   a) Jesus had a body (Heb. 2:14, 16; I Jn. 4:2, 3)
   b) Jesus had a soul (Mt. 26:38)
   c) Jesus had a spirit (Lk. 23:46)

2) Christ expressly called Himself, and was called, "Man."

John 8:40 - "Ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth."
Acts 2:22 - "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God . . ."
I Timothy 2:5 - "One mediator . . . the man Christ Jesus."

3) Christ frequently called Himself "the Son of man" (Lk. 19:10) - a title which identified the eternal son of God with the mortal sons of men.

   a) In the Bible, the term "son" is a Hebraism.
   A Hebraism is a unique, peculiar, or characteristic feature of the Hebrew language spoken by Jews. Every language has its own idioms and idiomatic phrases that must be understood within the context and culture of that language or ethnic group.

   b) In Hebrew understanding the term "son" could include the idea of physical generation (i.e. male offspring) but that is not the fundamental idea. Rather, the basic idea is identity.

A "son" is one who partakes of the qualities and characteristics of that person of which he is said to be a son.

c) The term "son" does not necessarily mean "offspring" or "progeny" but specifically refers to being "one with" or being "one identified with" someone or something

Examples:

I Tim. 1:12 -	Paul called Timothy "My own son in the faith.") (cp. Jn. 5:18).
John 17:12 -	Judas is identified with perdition (the "son of perdition")
Acts 4:36 -	Barnabas is identified with consolation ("son of consolation")
Jonah 4:10 -	The Gourd is identified with Night ("son of a night" ie. here today & gone tomorrow)

d) Thus, by the term "Son of man," Jesus clearly and fully identified Himself with mankind.

4) Jesus exercised all the attributes of human existence.

a) Birth (including pre-natal development -Lk. 2:6, 7)

b) Growth and development (Lk. 2:40, 52)

c) Physical appetites
- (1) Hunger (Mt. 4:2)
- (2) Thirst (Jn. 19:28)
- (3) Sleep (Mt. 8:24)

d) Emotions
- (1) Anger (Mk. 3:5)
- (2) Sorrow (Jn. 11:35)
- (3) Compassion (Jn. 13:23)
- (4) Anguish of soul (Jn. 12:27)

e) Human restrictions and limitations
- (1) Fatigue (weariness - Jn. 4:6)
- (2) Exhaustion (Lk. 22:43)
- (3) Time/space limitations (Mk. 11:13)
- (4) Death (Jn. 19:30)

3. The Unity of two natures in Christ

a. A third mystery of the incarnation involves how Christ could be totally God and totally man at the same time and in the same person.

b. The theological phrase that describes the union of Christ's two natures (divine and human) is the "Hypostatic union." ("hypostatic" = to cause to stand together)

c. The Hypostatic union of Christ can be defined as follows:

When Christ became man, His divine nature was joined together with a human nature so that He possessed two distinct and complete natures yet was one Person.

Simply defined: Christ is "two natures in one person" or in other words "one person with two natures"

d. FALSE views of the two natures of Christ:

1) Views which deny the deity of Christ - and thus emphasize only His humanity.

a) Arianism -

A man named Arias insisted that Christ is not eternal, but was the first and highest of created beings.

This doctrine was condemned at the Council of Nicaea, 325 A.D.

(Jehovah's Witnesses are 20th century Arians)

b) Ebionism -

A sect that insisted that Christ was only a man empowered by God at His baptism. Such unusual powers make Him appear to be God.

2) Views which deny the humanity of Christ - and thus emphasize only His deity.

a) Docetism -

This word comes from the Greek "dokeo," which means "to seem or appear."

They said: "Christ was only a spirit that appeared to have a body." They contended that Christ was a mere "theophany" - or fleshly appearance of God. (Note: such "appearances" are restricted to the O.T., not from the incarnation onward)

They held this view because they believed matter was "evil" and "impure." [John countered this view in I Jn. 4:1-3.]

b) Apollinarianism

This sect taught that Christ possessed a real body ("soma") and soul ("psuche"), but no human spirit ("pneuma").

The Scriptures, however, teach that Christ had a spirit (Lk.23:46; Compare with James 2:26).

3) Views which merge or confuse the two natures in some way, or divide the Person.

[NOTE: The Bible teaches that two distinct natures were united in one person.]

a) Nestorians

A man named Nestorius taught that Christ was two distinct persons. He did not believe that the two natures were united in one person.

He viewed Christ as simply a "deified man," not God incarnate. His Christ was "from below, not from above."

b) Eutychians

A man named Eutychus taught that Christ's two natures merged to form a third nature.

God's nature + Man's nature = A third nature

(The divine nature absorbed the human nature, which "watered down" the divine nature so that it was not the same as before the union.)

e. The Biblical view of the two natures in Christ:

1) The Scriptures teach that Christ had two natures when He became incarnate.

***Scriptural proofs of Christ's two natures:**

a) Romans 1:3-4

(1) "The seed of David according to the flesh" -- humanity (Jesus is man).

(2) "The Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness" -- deity (Jesus is God).
[NOTE: The words "spirit" and "Holiness" describe the essence of God (Jn. 4:24, 17:11). Only God is spirit, and only God is holy in and of Himself.]

b) Romans 9:5

". . . concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."

"Flesh" = humanity "God" = deity

c) Colossians 2:9

"For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

"Godhead" = divine nature

"Bodily" = human nature

d) I Peter 3:18

". . . put to death in the flesh, but quickened (made alive) by (in) the Spirit."

e) Matthew 1:21, 23

". . . call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people . . . call His name Immanuel, which being interpreted is 'God with us'."

The name "Jesus" identifies Him with man. "Immanuel" identifies him with God.

***Theological proofs of Christ's two natures:**

a) The two natures were absolutely necessary in order for Jesus to be an adequate sacrifice for the sins of the world.

(1) Jesus had to be God in order to be an infinite sacrifice - To satisfy the just demands of God (I Jn. 2:2 - "Propitiation . . . for the whole world"; cp. Rom. 3:25; Is. 53:11).

(2) Jesus had to be man in order to be a suitable sacrifice - to die for men, He had to become man. Otherwise, His sacrifice would not have equaled the payment which men were required to pay.

SEE Hebrews 2:14-17

b) The two natures were absolutely necessary in order for Jesus to be a Mediator between God and men (I Tim. 2:5).

(1) Job 9:32-33 - Job looked for a "daysman" (or arbitrator, who understands both god and man and can bring them together in harmony -- Ryrie Study Bible note).

(2) Hebrews 4:14-16 - In order for Jesus to be our "Great High Priest" in heaven, He must be God and man.

(3) Hebrews 7:24-26 - Christ is our intercessor as high priest. Being God and man, He can bridge the gap between the mortal and immortal, between the human and the divine.

(4) I John 2:1 - Jesus can be our advocate (defense attorney summoned along side) because He is the God-man.

c) The two natures were absolutely necessary in order for Jesus to sit as eternal King on the throne of David.

(1) To be King, Jesus had to be of the seed (lineage) of David (Humanity) (II Sam. 7:12-13; Lk. 1:31-32; Mt. 19:28; Acts 15:15-17).

(2) To be an eternal king, Jesus had to be God (deity) (II Sam. 7:13, 16; Lk. 1:31-33).

NOTE:

*When Christ became man, He possessed two DISTINCT natures.

The two natures are totally different from each other. Christ's divine nature must not be confused with His human nature.

When the two natures were joined together, they did not blend together to form a combination (third) nature. Rather, they remained distinct.

NOTE:

*When Christ became man, He possessed two COMPLETE natures.

Christ was not missing any deity, nor was He lacking any humanity when He became man.

(Note: Humanity is defined as having the nature of man [Adam] as originally created - without a sin aspect.)

The Lord Jesus was of the same substance ("homo ousios") with the Father as regarding His Godhead, and at the same time of the same substance with us as regarding His manhood. (cited in the Council of Chalceddon in 451 A.D.).

2) The Scriptures teach that Christ was one person when He became incarnate.

a) Though Jesus had two natures when He took upon Himself flesh, He was not two people, nor did He have a split personality.

[NOTE: Demon possession involves dual personalities - EX. Mark 5:1-20).

b) The person of Christ is never divided in Scripture.

It is most accurate to view Christ not as being "God and man" or "God in man" but "the God-man."

Jesus is theologically called "the theanthropic person" (From: "Theos" = God; "anthropos" = man).

c) Scriptural proofs of Christ being one person:

(1) Jesus always refers to Himself in the singular ("I, Me"), never in the plural ("we, us").

EX: John 3:3 - "I say unto thee"
John 17:23 - "Thou hast loved Me."

[NOTE: Jesus said "We" when referring to Himself and His disciples (Jn. 3:11), but always "I" or "Me" when referring to Himself.]

(2) Jesus distinguishes Himself from the Father (John 8:18), from the Spirit (John 16:7), and from other men (John 8:23).

However, He never distinguishes Himself as a divine person from Himself as a human person.

John 8:58 - ". . . before Abraham was I AM."

(3) All that Jesus is and does (His attributes and acts) within the two natures are ascribed to the one person.

--Luke 13:31-33

--Acts 20:28 - "God...hath purchased with His own blood."

(4) Many times attributes of the divine nature appear side by side with attributes of the human nature, but always in one person.

--Matthew 8:24-27

4. Misunderstanding of Scripture by Jehovah's Witnesses Regarding the Nature of Jesus Christ

1. Jn. 10:30 - "I and my Father are one" - in purpose and agreement (Note: v. 33, however! The Jew's response disproves this interpretation).

2. Christ was created by Jehovah God. J.W. proof:

   a. Col. 1:15 - "firstborn." Note: Interpreter must understand historical setting and Hebrew (Jewish) thought, and word usage (idiomatic expressions). "Firstborn" (πρωτοτοκος) has nothing to do with creation. Paul should have used πρωτοκτιστος if this is what he meant.

   "Firstborn" (πρωτοτοκος) in the Jewish mind refers to preeminence; As illustrated by the one with the birthright and it's privileges (EX: Jacob - Gen. 27). The word refers to rights to property or possessions, to authority, and to right to rule. See Gen. 49:3 for this definition (cp. Deut. 21:17). Note also that "Israel" is called "firstborn" by God (Ex. 4:22). Therefore, "firstborn" is a title of <u>pre-eminence</u> as specifically stated in Colossians 1:18. Being called the "firstborn" meant to have a position of honor and privilege (Ps. 89:27). Follow the flow of thought between Col. 1:15, 16 ff, and you will find that honor (preeminence) is in view, <u>not</u> origin.

   In the context of Colossians, the Apostle Paul is arguing AGAINST what the J.W.'s are asserting: namely, the Gnostic heresy that Jesus Christ was the <u>first</u> of many other <u>created</u> intermediaries between God and men.

   b. Rev. 3:14 - "Beginning of the creation of God." The Greek term for "beginning" is αρχη, which can be translated "origin" or "source" and also "authority" or "rulership," which is the most likely intended meaning in view of the context. Note usage in Luke 12:11, 20:20; and Col. 2:10.

   c. John 3:15 - "Only begotten" - μονογενης. "Mono" = one; "genea" = generation, clan, race, or kind. Jesus is the "one of a kind" Son, or in other words, the "unique" Son of God the Father. (cp. Heb. 11:17, where Isaac is called the "only begotten" son, yet Abraham had Ishmael before Isaac!).

3. Christ is believed to be Michael in "pre-human" state.

   The name Michael means "who is like God?" Note: In Jude 9, Michael wasn't even equal to the status of Satan. In this verse, he is called the "archangel." Observe how the archangel is CONTRASTED with Christ in I Thes. 4:16.

4. Christ is believed to have NOT risen bodily. Note: Lk. 24:36; Jn. 20:27-28, 21:12-14; I Pet. 3:18; Rev. 1:7; Acts 1:3, 5:30-32.

5. The Father is believed to be of greater essence than the Son.

J.W. proof: Jn. 14:28 - "Greater than I." The word translated "greater" is "meizon" (μειζων - from "megas"), which compares extent, not essence; degree, not quality. Note: Jesus did not say the Father was "better" than the Son (πλειων - Mt. 5:20; 12:41).

God "the Father," being Spirit (Jn. 4:24) had a more extensive influence on the world than the Son, who was limited to a physical body while on earth. In other words, Jesus being incarnate could only be at one place at one time while on earth (He surrendered the use of His omnipresence for a time - Heb. 2:9). This is why He said that His disciples should "rejoice" when He spoke of His ascension to the Father (v. 28).

After Jesus received a glorified body following the resurrection and after He ascended to Heaven, He was restored to His former greatness (Jn. 17:5; Mt. 18:19; Phil. 2:9). He can now work on a larger scale geographically (cp. v. 12; SEE Eph. 1:20-23, 4:10; Col. 3:11 - "Christ now fills all things").

Though this is not the point in John 14:28, it is also important to note that the Father is greater than the Son in position (headship) in the Trinity (I Cor. 11:3). What the Father DOES, He does THROUGH the Son, BY the Spirit. There is "subordination" in the modes of operation or function, but never any difference in essence mentioned in Scripture.

IV. The Holy Spirit and the Trinity

The Bible Teaches that the Holy Spirit is God (Deity)

A. The Personality of the Holy Spirit

NOTE: "Who is the Holy Spirit? If we consider only Acts 1:8, 'Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you,' we might think that the Spirit is merely a power, strength from God. However it is easy to demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is more than this. He is a Person." (Pache, Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, p. 11)

The Biblical demonstration of the personality of the Holy Spirit can be developed along several lines.

1. The Holy Spirit performs ACTS which can be performed only by a person.

That is, several actions are attributed to Him which could not be accomplished by an impersonal "power, influence, or thing."

a. He teaches and brings to remembrance (Jn. 14:26)

b. He testifies of Christ (Jn. 15:26)

c. He convicts (demonstrates the guilt, proves culpability) the world of sin (Jn. 16:8)

d. He guides into all truth, by hearing, speaking, and showing (Jn. 16:13)

e. He "bore along" the writers of Scriptures, and He speaks through their writings (II Pet. 1:21; Acts 1:16)

f. He spoke to Philip, commanding him to go to the eunuch (Acts 8:29)

g. He called Barnabas and Saul to the ministry (Acts 13:2), and sent them forth in their journeys (13:4)

h. He forbade Paul and Silas to travel to northern Galatia (Acts 16:6,7)

i. He makes intercession for believers (Rom. 8:26)

j. He bears witness with our spirits (Rom. 8:14)

2. The Holy Spirit is given NAMES and TITLES which demand personality

3. The Holy Spirit possesses the essential ATTRIBUTES of personality

a. He possesses intellect (knowledge)

1) He is capable of thought; Paul speaks of searching the "mind of the Spirit" (Romans 8:27)

2) The Spirit knows and searches the things of God (I Cor. 2:10, 11)

3) He has the ability to utilize language, or words (I Cor. 2:13)

b. He possesses emotion

1) He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30)

2) He loves (Rom. 15:30)

c. He possess a will

His gifts are distributed as He wills
(I Cor. 12:11)

4. The Holy Spirit can be TREATED like a person.

That is, many of the actions spoken of as performed upon or against the Spirit could not be performed against an impersonal power or influence. For instance, the Spirit can be:

a. Lied to (Acts 5:3)
b. Tempted (Acts 5:9)
c. Resisted (Acts 7:51)
d. Grieved (Eph. 4:30)
e. Outraged (Heb. 10:29)
f. Blasphemed (Mt. 12:31)
g. Called upon (Ezek. 37:9)

5. The Holy Spirit is referred to with masculine PRONOUNS

a. The Greek Word for "spirit" is pneuma; it is a neuter word

b. According to the normal rules of Greek grammar, all pronouns to which pneuma served as an antecedent would be neuter pronouns.

However, the New Testament again and again uses masculine pronouns in referring to the Spirit.
The point: "The pronoun is masculine to emphasize the fact that the Holy Spirit is a person and not a thing" (Pache, p. 13)

c. This is true with reference to three different types of pronouns in the Greek New Testament.
1) Demonstrative pronouns ("this," "that") (Jn. 16:13, 14)
2) Relative pronouns ("who") (Jn. 15:26; Eph. 1:14)
3) Personal pronouns ("He") (Jn. 16:7, 8)

d. "These departures from the normal rules of grammar in connection with the use of several kinds of pronouns are significant proofs of the real personality of the Holy Spirit" (Ryrie, p. 15)

The Holy Spirit is always referred to as "He" never "it."

Christ always spoke of the Holy Spirit as a Person and never as a thing or a mere influence (John 14, 16)

B. The Deity of the Holy Spirit

NOTE: Having demonstrated the Biblical truth that the Spirit of God is a person, we come to the question of His deity. Historically, this has not been as much the object of struggle as the deity of Jesus has been.

The word "deity" refers to that which is divine, or God. The Holy Spirit as presented in the Bible has the same essential deity as God the Father and the Son. Therefore, He is to be worshipped, adored, loved, and obeyed as God. The Holy Spirit is God!

Biblical proof of the deity of the Spirit:

1. The Holy Spirit is assigned NAMES and TITLES which can be assigned only to God.

a. He is called God

1) Acts 5:3-4 - to lie to the Holy Ghost is to lie to God

2) Is. 6:9; cp. Acts 28:25 - that which God spoke to Isaiah is said by Paul to have been spoken by the Holy Spirit.

3) Jer. 31:31-34; cp. Heb. 10:15

b. His title "Spirit of God" is demonstrated to speak of absolute oneness with God (I Cor. 2:11)

Just as there is no distinction between man and his spirit (they are one), there is in essence no distinction between God and His Spirit.

c. Jesus referred to the Spirit as "another of exactly the same kind Comforter" (Jn. 14:16), teaching that the Spirit is co-equal in character with the Son.

2. The Holy Spirit possesses <u>ATTRIBUTES</u> of greatness, which can be possessed only by God.

a. Omniscience (Is. 40:13-14; I Cor. 2:10-11; Jn. 14:26; I Tim. 4:1)
b. Omnipresence (Ps. 139:7; Jn. 14:17)
c. Omnipotence (Zech. 14:6; Micah 3:8; Lk. 1:35: Rom. 15:13)
d. Omnisapience (Is. 40:13)
e. Perfect holiness (Lk. 11:13)
f. Perfect truth (I Jn. 5:6)
g. Eternality (Gen. 1:2; Heb. 9:14)

3. The Holy Spirit performs <u>WORKS</u> which could only be ascribed to God.

a. He is responsible for <u>creation</u> (Job 33:4)

b. He is responsible for the <u>inspiration</u> of Scripture (He "bore men along" in the production of God's Word - I Pet. 1:21).

c. He performs undeniable <u>miracles</u>
   1) Virgin birth (Lk. 1:35)
   2) Caught away Philip (Acts 8:39)
   3) <u>Signs and miracles</u> through Apostles (Rom. 15:19)
   4) He reveals prophecy (Acts 2:17-18)

d. He <u>convicts</u> men of sin, righteousness, and judgment (Jn. 16:8)

e. He <u>regenerates</u>, imparting a Godly nature to a fallen man when he places his faith in God's Word (Jn. 3:5-6; Titus 3:5)

f. He <u>unites</u> believers to the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13)

g. He <u>comforts</u> as Jesus could comfort (Jn. 14:16)

h. He <u>intercedes</u> (prays) for God's people (Rom. 8:26, 27)

i. He <u>sanctifies</u> the yielded child of God (II Thes. 2:13)

j. He imparts <u>life</u> (Jn. 6:63; Rom. 8:11); He is the direct cause of resurrection (cp. I Pet. 3:18)

k. He <u>commands</u> and <u>forbids</u> (Acts 8:29, 11:12, 13:2, 16:6-7)

l. He <u>seals</u> believers (Eph. 4:30)

4. The Holy Spirit is <u>ASSOCIATED</u> with the Father and the Son in ways which definitely speak of oneness of essence.

a. Lk. 3:21, 22 - He is present with the Father and Son at Christ's baptism

b. Eph. 2:18 - He gives believers <u>access</u> through the Son to the Father

c. Jn. 16:13-15 - A <u>co-worker</u> in the Godhead

d. Mt. 28:19 - in believer's baptism ("in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit")

e. II Cor. 13:14 - In Paul's benediction

f. I Cor. 6:29 (cp. I Cor. 3:16; Col. 1:27) - the <u>indwelling</u> Spirit is equated with God the Father and God the Son.

g. The Spirit is given <u>names</u> which speak of His oneness with God.

*"The <u>Lord</u> is that <u>Spirit</u>" - II Cor. 3:17

1) Names showing His oneness with the <u>Father</u>

a) "The Spirit of your Father" (Mt. 10:20; Acts 1:4)

b) "The Spirit of the Lord" (Lk. 4:18)

c) "The Spirit of God" (Mt. 3:16; I Cor. 6:11; I Pet. 4:14)

2) Names showing His oneness with the <u>Son</u>

a) "The Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9)

b) "The Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:9; Acts 16:7)

c) "The Spirit of His [God's] Son" (Gal. 4:6)

h. The Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son

1) He came from the Father's presence

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you". (John 14:16-18)
Jesus is One with the Spirit who would come into the disciples.

John 15:26 - "The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father"

Note: The word "proceedeth" does not refer to the Holy Spirit coming into existence, but to a new ministry of the Spirit, who always existed.

The Spirit's "proceeding from the Father" is not ontological but economical; ie.e. it is not describing essence but function. The Holy Spirit has a subordinate position in the Triune Godhead but is equal in essence with the Father and the Son.

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Gal. 4:6 - "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts"

2) He was sent by the Son's authority

John 15:26 - "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you..."

John 16:7 - "I will send Him unto you"

Rom. 8:9 - "The Spirit of God...The Spirit of Christ"

Jehovah's Witness Teaching regarding the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is believed by the Jehovah's Witness organization to be an "invisible active force." Note, however: Jn. 14:16-18, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:7-14. These verses reveal the personality of the Spirit. Note also the personal pronouns used in reference to Him! The Holy Spirit is described in Scripture as having an ability to: know (I Cor. 2:11), love (Rom. 15:39), will (I Cor. 12:11), be grieved (Eph. 4:30), be offended (Mt. 12:3), and lied to (Acts 5:3, 4; Note - lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God).

V. Difficulties with the doctrine of the Trinity

(Dr. David Burggraff)

Those who deny the Trinity sometimes object to the use of certain terms that seem to imply that Christ is inferior to the Father, which if true, would deny the Trinity. Several of these problematic terms are noted here.

1. Meaning of *begotten*.

The term *begotten* is used in several senses with respect to Christ. First, it is evident from Matthew 1:20 that Christ was begotten in humanity but not in His deity. Christ was God from all eternity (Mic. 5:2), but at the incarnation He took to Himself an additional nature, namely, a human nature. The Holy Spirit superintended Mary's conception to assure the sinlessness of the humanity of Christ. It is with reference to the humanity of Christ that the term begotten is used; it could never be used with reference to His deity.

Begotten does not relate to Jesus' being the Son of God. In time and space Jesus was declared to be the Son of God (Ps. 2:7; Acts 13:32-33; Rom. 1:4). These verses emphasize that Jesus' Sonship is vindicated or verified as a result of the resurrection, but the resurrection did not make Him the Son of God. Jesus has been the son of God from eternity. Thus Ps. 2:7 and Acts 13:33 emphasize that begotten refers to the public declaration of the Sonship pf Christ (but not the origination of the Sonship).[3]

2. Meaning of *First-Born*.

Those who deny the deity of Christ frequently do so by referring to the term *first-born*, suggesting that if the term relates to Christ it must imply He had a beginning in time. However, both a lexical study of the word as well as a contextual study of the usages provides a different solution to the meaning for first-born. In its OT culture the predominant emphasis was on the status of the oldest son. He enjoyed the double portion of the inheritance (Dt. 21:17), privileges over other family members (Gen. 27:1-4, 35-37), preferential treatment (Gen. 43:33), and the respect of others (Gen 37:22). Figuratively, the word denotes priority or supremacy (Ex. 4:22; Jer.31:9)[4] and so is used of Christ. In Colossians 1:18 where Christ is referred to as first-born the meaning is clear: as first-born, Christ is Head of the church and preeminent in everything. In Hebrew 1:6 the supremacy of Christ as the first-born is seen in that the angels worship Him. Only God is worshiped.

[3]See Buswell's helpful discussion, *Systematic Theology*, 1:106-9.
[4]J. E. Rosscup, "First-born," in Merrill C. Tenny, ed., *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 2:540-41.

Psalm 89:27 is perhaps one of the clearest explanations of the term *first-born*. This is an example of synthetic poetry in Hebrew in which the second in line explains the first. In this Messianic Psalm God affirms that Messiah will be the first-born, that is, the highest of the kings of the earth. First-born is explained as ruling over the kings of the entire earth. From both a linguistic and exegetical study it is clear that *first-born* draws attention to the preeminent status of Jesus as Messiah.

3. Meaning of *Only-Begotten*.

The term *only-begotten* (Greek *monogenes*) (cf John 1:14, 18; 3:16; 1 John 4:9) does not suggest a beginning point in time but rather means that Jesus as the only-begotten Son of God is "unique," "the only one of its kind," "the only example in its category."[5] Only-begotten is used to mark out Jesus uniquely above all earthly and heavenly beings. In Genesis 22:2, 12, 16 it reflects the concept of "only, precious" as Isaac was viewed by his father Abraham.[6] John the apostle describes the glory radiated by the unique Son of God – no one else radiated the glory of the Father (John 1:14); moreover, the Son "explained" the Father – no one but the unique Son could explain the Father. It was the unique Son whom God sent into the world; eternal life was provided only through the unique Son of God (John 3:16). In examining the passages it is evident the *only-begotten* does not suggest a coming into existence, but rather it expresses the *uniqueness* of the person. Christ was unique as the Son of God, sent by the Father from heaven.

The fact that the phrase "only-begotten" refers to "uniqueness" is fully substantiated in Hebrews 11:17 where Isaac is referred to as the "only-begotton" son of Abraham. Yet Abram had many other children, including Ishmael and sons through Keturah after the death of Sarah.

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his <u>only begotten son</u>." (Heb. 11:17)

[5]William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, revised by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1979), 527.
[6]Raymond E. Brown, "The Gospel According to John I-XII" in *The Anchor Bible*, 34 vols., 2nd ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 1:13-14.