

---

THE  
GOD  
FAMILY  
AND  
THE  
HOLY  
SPIRIT

AN ARTICLE REPRINT SERIES

---

**Is God a Trinity or a family? Was Jesus Christ God, or merely a man? Was Jesus the born Son of God, or only an adopted “son”? Is the Holy Spirit a person or the creative power of the Godhead?**

The belief that God is one substance, yet three persons, is one of the central doctrines of the Christian religion. Yet for all this belief in the Trinity, it is a doctrine that is not clearly understood by most Christian laymen. Few are aware of any problems with the doctrine of the Trinity. They simply take it for granted — leaving the mysterious doctrinal aspects to theologians.

And if the layman were to investigate further, he would be confronted with discouraging statements similar to the following: “The mind of man cannot fully understand the mystery of the Trinity. He who would try to understand the mystery fully will lose his mind. But he who would deny the Trinity will lose his soul.”

Such a statement means that the concept of the Trinity should be accepted or else. But, merely to accept it as doctrine without *proving* it would be totally contrary to Scripture. God inspired Paul to write: “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (I Thes. 5:21).

A Christian should prove to himself once and for all whether or not God is a Trinity.

# THE GOD FAMILY— OPEN OR CLOSED?

REMEMBER back to your high school days when there was a particular group you wanted to break into. Maybe it was the athletic clique, or perhaps the scholar's corner, or the popular cheerleader's circle. How painful it was when you were rejected because you didn't quite meet their standards. What an empty feeling to be in the "out-group," to feel unwanted, rejected, not good enough.

But do you know what's supposed to be the universe's most exclusive club—the clique from which all mankind is utterly excluded?

*It's the "trinity"!*

Let's look at two verses in the Bible that supposedly mention the trinity and see what they really say. Be prepared for quite a shock.

Turn to I John 5:7-8. Notice how these verses read in the King James Version: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

Virtually all scholars agree that the words "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," are wrong words that have been inserted into the text in an attempt to bolster arguments for the trinity.

The *Interpreter's Bible* states, "This verse [I John 5:7] in the KJV [King James Version] is to be rejected . . . It appears in no ancient Greek MS [manuscript] nor is it cited by any Greek father; of all the versions only the Latin contained it, and even this in none of its most ancient sources."

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown's commentary shows that the only Greek manuscripts containing this "trinity reference" are either "copied from the modern Latin Vulgate," "added in the margin by a recent

hand," etc. "All the old versions omit the words. . . . [I John 5:7] was therefore first written as a marginal comment to complete the sense [which is the trinitarian rationalization], then, as early, at least as the eighth century, was introduced into the *text* of the Latin Vulgate. . . . *Luecke* notices as internal evidence against the words, John never uses 'the Father' and 'the Word' as correlates, but, like other New Testament writers, associates 'the Son' with 'the Father,' and always refers 'the Word' to God as its correlate, not 'the Father.'"

Now we are going to find out what I John 5:7-8 really means. We're going to see that the very section in God's Word which has been tampered with to try to prove the trinity in fact proves just the opposite.

First, here's how I John 5:7-8 should read: "For there are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one." So there are indeed three things that bear record or give testimony, the Spirit, the water and the blood.

But what do they bear record to? To a closed Godhead clique of three beings? NO? Just the opposite!

The record of what they are witnessing to is clearly given in verses 11-12: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." So what is witnessed to is the fact that if we have Jesus Christ living His life in us, then through Him we have eternal life residing in us right now.

In other words, to use the analogy given throughout I John and elsewhere in the Bible, we are now *begotten* sons of God and, if we don't abort ourselves in this growth process, we'll later become *born* sons of God. That is,

we'll actually become members of the greatly expanded Family of God.

There can be *only* three God-beings in the trinity idea. But isn't it ironic that the place where a verse has been inserted to try to establish a God-clique, a closed trinity, is the very place where God is showing how He is *adding* to His Family?

The three that "bear record" in I John 5:7-8 are:

1) *God's Spirit*, which is not a person but the *power of God*, the "down payment" of begetting, given by God to show that He means business and will later finish the payment when you're born into the Kingdom of God with a wholly spiritual body (Eph. 1:13-14).

2) *The water*—baptism, which symbolizes our burial and death so that a new entity can begin to exist (Rom. 6:4), an entity that can grow into a Son of God.

3) *The blood* — Christ's death, which reconciles us to God, by paying *our* death penalty incurred for *our* sins, thereby enabling us to go on to become a Son of God (Rom. 5:10).

Every Christian who is on the way to becoming a member of the Family of God must partake of the three things that witness to the fact God wants *all* mankind to join Him in His eternally ruling Family—baptism, the receiving of the Holy Spirit, and the yearly Passover that commemorates Jesus Christ's death. These three *unique* occurrences in one's life prove *powerfully* that *you* are another Son of God on the way to becoming *born of God*.

*God is a Family*—not a trinity. God's Family will not be limited to an intractably closed circle of three. This is one group you don't have to be excluded from!

You can be put into the greatest group of all.

*God's Family is open!* □

# I John 5:7

In a deliberate and deceptive attempt to foist the false trinity doctrine upon the world, a monk copyist in the fourth century A.D. inserted totally spurious words into the Bible in order to "prove" this major doctrine of pagan antiquity.

Turn in your own Bible (King James Version) to I John 5:7-8: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.*

But did you know that not one of the italicized words is in any of the accepted New Testament Greek manuscripts? Did you know this spurious section was not found in the text of any Greek manuscripts until *after* the invention of printing? Comparison with many of the more modern translations and simple research will prove the point. Verses 7 and 8 should actually read as follows: "There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree." This is how the passage is rendered in the Revised Standard Version, perhaps the best overall of modern Bible translations.

The editors of both liberal and conservative Bible commentaries (an-

cient and modern) agree as to the very dubious origin of I John 5:7 (as it now stands in the King James or Authorized Version). Notice a couple of quotes from two commentaries of recent vintage. Says the conservatively oriented *New Bible Commentary Revised*: "... The words are clearly a gloss and are rightly excluded by RSV [Revised Standard Version] even from its margin" (p. 1269). *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, universally recognized as a standard liberal work, is even more incisive with its comments: "The famous interpolation after 'three witnesses' is not printed even in RSV, and rightly . . . No respectable Greek MS [manuscript] contains it. Appearing first in a late 4th century Latin text, it entered the Vulgate and finally the NT [New Testament] of Erasmus [and eventually the King James]" (p. 1038).

The translators of the Revised Version of 1881 immediately spotted the difficulties with I John 5:7. The passage occurs in *only* two modern Greek manuscripts, in one or two ancient versions of little value and, of course, in many late copies of the Latin Vulgate. This is the extent of the textual support for this dubious verse.

It is lacking in every manuscript of this epistle written *before* the invention of printing, one excepted, the

*Codex Montfortii*, in Trinity College, Dublin.

It is wanting in both the Syriac, all the Arabic, Ethiopic, the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Slavonian, etc.—in a word, all the ancient versions but the *Vulgate*—and even the *oldest* manuscripts of the *Vulgate* omit it.

The fact could not be ignored that not a single Greek manuscript or church-lesson book before the fifteenth century had any trace of I John 5:7. Finally no Greek father even quotes it in any discussion concerning the Trinity doctrine itself.

Consequently the passage was omitted and it does *not* appear in the Revised Version of 1881—the first scholarly revision of the King James Version of any consequence—or in any modern translation.

F.F. Bruce, a respected British scholar, has this to say about I John 5:7: "... A footnote rightly points out that the passage is 'not in any of the early Greek mss, or any of the early translations, or in the best mss of the Vulgate itself' and suggests that it is probably a gloss that has crept into the text" [*The English Bible*, p. 217].

Clearly it is a spurious addition to the New Testament Canon. I John 5:7 should be considered nonexistent as far as the Bible is concerned.

# Matthew 28:19

A grossly misunderstood text often cited to "prove" there is a Trinity is Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

To imply that this verse means that all three (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) are persons is just not being honest with the Scriptures. Clearly the first two (God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ) are two separate individual spirit personalities in the Godhead; but that fact does *not* automatically make the Holy Spirit also a person.

People give names to many things that are simply not persons. Nearly everything—whether person, place or thing—*has a name!*

But why did Jesus command the apostles to baptize converts into these three names? And why must they be so baptized in order to receive the Holy Spirit? Scholars trans-

late the Greek expression *eis to onoma*, into the name of, something like "into the possession of." When God the Father grants human beings *real repentance* (Rom. 2:4; Acts 11:18; II Tim. 2:25) we then belong to Him. We become His sons (literally!)—*the sons of God* (bearing His name)—when we receive and are led by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9, 14, 16-17). We become a part of that God Family which the Holy Spirit also belongs to, though not as a person.

Human beings often bear the names of their forebears, i.e., Johnson, Robertson, Jackson, meaning originally the sons of John, Robert and Jack.

"God" is *the family name* in English of the divine Kingdom of spirit beings. The Father's name is called "God" in English. Jesus Christ—who was crucified so our past sins may be forgiven—is also called *God* in John 1:1, Hebrews 1:8 and other New Testa-

ment texts. The Holy Spirit—which comes forth from God—is the begettal agent by which we receive the earnest of our salvation (II Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:14; Rom. 8:16).

Many religionists do not understand the part that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit each play in the salvation process. The Trinity is the result, in part, of such fundamental misunderstandings.

But here is another one of the "famous" biblical opposites. Instead of teaching the pagan doctrine of the Trinity, Matthew 28:19 really tells us that God is a growing family or Kingdom into which we may enter upon repentance, baptism, the receipt of the Holy Spirit and patient endurance to the end of our natural lives and/or Christ's coming—whichever comes first. A closed Trinity or triad, or triumvirate of three persons is as far from God's mind and His plan for human beings as the east is from the west.

# WHO WAS JESUS?

***Your Savior—was He man, God, or what? Where did He come from? How did He get here? Was He really divine? Could it be true that Christ and the God of the Old Testament are one and the same Person? Many have asked these most basic and important questions. Here, from the book of John, are the answers.***

Most all human beings either have or have had a “best friend,” or a “closest buddy”—someone with whom they share a side of themselves seldom seen by others.

Though Jesus loved all men, He was especially close to His disciple John. The apostle himself revealed this warm relationship in his own Gospel. He is a bit hesitant about mentioning himself in the first person—although he wasn’t at all hesitant about mentioning the other disciples by name.

He is the only one of Christ’s biographers who was bold enough to point out Simon Peter as the man who severed the servant’s ear during Jesus’ arrest in the garden (John 18:10). Yet he never mentions *himself* by name in his entire book; when he writes of “John,” he refers to John the Baptist.

**“The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved.”** At His last Passover, “Jesus was deeply troubled and testified, ‘I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me.’ His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. One of them, *the disciple whom Jesus loved*, was reclining next to him. Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, ‘Ask him which one he means’” (John 13:21-24, *The New International Version*).

Who was this “disciple whom Jesus loved”?

Some days after Jesus’ resurrection from the dead, Peter engaged in an extended discourse with the risen Christ. Concluding the conversation, “Peter turned and saw following them *the disciple whom Jesus loved*, who had lain close to his breast at the [last Passover] supper and had said, ‘Lord who is it that is going to betray you?’ When Peter saw him, he said

to Jesus, ‘Lord, what about this man?’

“Jesus said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain [alive] until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!’” (John 21:20-22.)

Verse 24 then reveals the identity of this disciple and future apostle: “This is the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true.” This could be none other than the author of “the Gospel According to John.” John remained alive to write the book of Revelation long after Peter’s martyrdom. Apparently John was the only apostle whose life did not end in martyrdom. It is thought that, although imprisoned, he was allowed to live out his last days in relative peace on the Isle of Patmos.

John was also favored to be among the small inner circle of disciples who witnessed a foretaste of the Kingdom of God in vision. “And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain *apart*” (Matt. 17:1). There they saw Jesus transfigured before them, with Moses and Elijah.

It was also John who was the first disciple to believe Christ had risen from the dead. Shortly after Christ’s resurrection, Mary Magdalene came and saw that the tomb was empty. “So she ran, and went to Simon Peter and *the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved* . . .” (John 20:2).

John outran Simon Peter to the tomb, but impetuous Peter went in first (verses 3-7). “Then *the other disciple*, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and *he saw and believed*” (verse 8).

**John’s Deeper Understanding.** Perhaps in part because of his special closeness to Jesus, John was

given of God a deeper and broader understanding of his Savior. Matthew, Mark and Luke each begin their “minibiographies” of Jesus with an account of John the Baptist or with the conception of the human Jesus.

But John’s beginning pre-dates even the events in the Old Testament: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God*. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:1-3).

Verse 14 explains who this “Word” was: “*And the Word became flesh* and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we [the disciples] have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.” Jesus Christ is the only heavenly Being who ever became a fleshly human being and lived in this world.

These very few verses tell us a great deal about the nature of Jesus Christ: 1) He was God; 2) He was with another Being called God from the very beginning; 3) he was the “Word” (Greek: *Logos*) or Spokesman for the Father (“No one has ever seen God,” meaning the other Being called God, verse 18).

John’s first letter and two of Paul’s epistles provide us with an excellent commentary on these beginning scriptures in the fourth Gospel. As if by habit, John begins his first epistle with “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life *which was with the Father* and was made manifest to us—that which we have

seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with *the Father* and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:1-3).

This letter, as the first verses of John's Gospel, makes it plain that the Being with whom they had lived, worked, played, swam and fished was none other than a member of the Godhead—with, and like, God the Father.

The Apostle Paul wrote: "He [the Father] has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son [Jesus Christ], in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him *all things were created*, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things . . ." (Col. 1:13-17; compare with Eph. 3:9). Paul here points out the broad and massive extent of the work and authority of the pre-human Christ.

**John's Theme—the Godship of Christ.** John emphasizes over and over again, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (see II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21; John 14:26), the pre-existence of Christ as God before His human birth. It is a prominent theme running throughout his entire Gospel. Notice it again in the very first chapter. "He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not" (John 1:10). If He made the world, then He *preceded* His own creation. Yet when He came in the human flesh, the vast majority of those who had the opportunity to know Him rejected their own Creator.

John the Baptist picks up this same theme. "John bore witness to him, and cried, 'This was he of whom I said, He who comes after me ranks before me, for *he was before me*'" (John 1:15). Was the Baptist indulging in some kind of spiritual double-talk here? No! John the Baptist was begotten and born into the human flesh *before* Jesus was (Luke 1:35-36, 57-60). But *Jesus was God* long before John was ever conceived. The Baptist repeats it in verse 30: ". . . After me comes a man who

ranks before me, for *he was before me.*"

**Jesus' Supernatural Knowledge.** John revealed that Christ possessed powers that no normal human being had, although He was certainly subject to the pulls and temptations of the flesh (Heb. 4:15).

When Christ called Nathanael to a discipleship (and future apostleship), "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, 'Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!' Nathanael said to him, 'How do you know me?' Jesus answered him, 'Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.' Nathanael answered him, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God!' . . . Jesus answered

---

*Each person shall be given the opportunity to become a member of the God Family. That in a nutshell is the purpose of human life!*

---

him, 'Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things [miracles] than these'" (John 1:47-50).

Notice also the last three verses of John, chapter two. "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name when they saw his signs which he did; but Jesus did not trust himself to them, *because he knew all men* and needed no one to bear witness of man; for he himself knew what was in man" (verses 23-25). Christ the Creator had made mankind and He knew all about people's human weaknesses.

**Jesus—From Heaven.** John knew Jesus' true origin. Quoting Christ Himself, John 3:13 declares: "No one has ascended into heaven but *he who descended* from heaven, the Son of man."

John continues this theme in the second half of the chapter: "He who

comes *from above* is above all; he who is of the earth belongs to the earth, and of the earth he speaks; he who comes from heaven is above all. He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one [the vast majority] receives his testimony; he [only a few] who receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. For *he whom God has sent* utters the words of God, for it is not by measure that he gives the Spirit" (verses 30-34).

While Jesus Christ was yet in heaven (*before* His human birth), our Savior saw and heard the message that He later spoke on earth. Here, in a conversation with the religious leaders of His generation, He said: "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from [heaven] and where I am going [heaven]" (John 8:14, *The New International Version*). He continued in verses 23 and 28: "You are from below, I am *from above*; you are of this world, I am not of this world. . . . When you have lifted up [crucified] the Son of man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority but speak thus as the Father taught me."

Backtracking to verse 26, ". . . But *he who sent me* is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him."

Verse 38: "I speak of what I have seen with my Father. . . ."

Verse 42: ". . . I came not of my own accord, but *he sent me.*"

**Jesus—The God of the Old Testament.** In this very long dialogue of Jesus, the Pharisees brought up the subject of Abraham (the greatest of Jewish national heroes). Jesus explained to them: "Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see *my day*; he saw it and was glad" (verse 56). The One who became Christ actually walked and talked with the patriarch Abraham (Gen. 12:1-4; 13:14-18; 17:1-22; 18:1-33; 22:1-2). Of course, these religionists simply didn't grasp what Jesus was saying. "The Jews then said to him, 'You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?' Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, *before Abraham was, I am*'" (verses 57-58).

Jesus Christ was the same God who walked and talked with Moses in

the wilderness—the same “I AM” (see Ex. 3:14) who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. Paul makes this plain. “I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the [Red] sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. . . . For they drank from the same supernatural Rock which followed them, and *the [‘that,’ KJV] Rock was Christ*” (I Cor. 10:1-4).

This same Personage in the God-head presided over the Flood in Noah’s day. Peter gives us the facts: “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just and the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he [Christ] went and preached unto the spirits [demons] in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (I Peter 3:18-20, KJV).

**From Creator to Son.** But we find the most emphatic statements about the pre-existence of Jesus Christ in the book of John. The book’s major emphasis is on the undeniable fact that *Jesus Christ was God* before His human birth. Even the Pharisee Nicodemus said to Jesus: “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher *come from God . . .*” (John 3:2).

Jesus told the leaders of this small sect: “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 5:17-18, KJV). If you have any sons or daughters, they are on the same plane and level of existence as yourself. They are *not* inferior beings like animals. Jesus was equal with God in the sense that He existed on the same God-plane that the Father did. True, the Father was and is greater in authority—“My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28, KJV).

Continuing His discussion with the Pharisees, Christ drove home the point that He was indeed God’s Son: “Truly, truly, I say to you, *the Son* can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he *sees the Father doing;*

for whatever he does, that *the Son* does likewise. For *the Father* loves *the Son*, and shows him all that he himself is doing; and greater works than these will he show him, that you may marvel. For as *the Father* raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will” (John 5:19-21). Jesus possesses the same powers that the father does, because He too is God.

Jesus Christ said: “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). Not that they are the same Being, but they are one in purpose, one in plan, and most of all, one in the sense that they are members of the same God family.

If anyone in that generation saw Jesus, they saw how One in the God family would act if He were here on earth—and specifically the Father. “And Jesus cried out and said, ‘He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And *he who sees me sees him who sent me*’” (John 12:44-45).

**Jesus Resumed His Glorified Godship.** We have firmly established the fact that Jesus was God before His human birth. Notice just one more verse to that effect: “And now, Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence *with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made*” (John 17:5). Jesus was a glorified God-Being before there ever

was an angel or man on earth. In fact, Jesus has eternally existed as God. (For more vital information on this subject, write for our free article entitled “Has God Eternally Existed?”)

But He divested Himself of His former glory and came down to this earth as a human being to (among many other things) die for the sins of all mankind. Paul wrote to the Philippian brethren: “Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:5-8).

Paul then brings out the fact that Jesus is *now* restored to His former glory: “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow [God does not allow human beings to worship other human beings or even angels—only members of the God family], in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (verses 9-11).

## Christ in the Book of John

John had an unusually close, friendly relationship with Jesus. He seemed to understand better than the other disciples where Jesus came from, where He was going, and what He was all about. Below are references from John’s Gospel on the nature of Christ.

**Christ Created the World:**

1:1-3; 1:10

**He Was the God of the Old Testament:**

1:15, 30; 5:46; 8:56-58

**He Is One With God the Father and equal to Him:**

5:17-18; 10:30, 33, 38; 12:44-45; 15:23; 17:11, 20-26; 19:7

**He Rules over Everything:**

3:34-35; 5:19-23, 26-27; 16:15

**He Became a Man:**

1:14

**He Came Down From Heaven:**

3:13, 31; 6:38, 41, 51, 58, 62; 8:14, 21-23

**He Was Sent by God the Father:**

3:16-17, 34; 4:34; 5:30; 6:29, 44, 57; 7:28-29, 33; 8:42; 9:4; 10:34-36; 11:42; 16:27-29; 17:7; 20:21

**His Authority Was From God the Father:**

7:16-18; 8:16, 26-29; 12:44, 49-50; 14:24; 15:15

**He Went Back to Heaven:**

6:62; 7:33-34; 8:21; 13:1-3, 33; 14:1-3, 12; 16:27-29; 20:17

**He Will Come Again:**

5:25-29; 14:3; 21:22-23

John also wrote of Jesus' resuming His Godship. Notice Christ's words in the true Lord's prayer: "And now I am no more in the world . . . and I come to thee" (John 17:11, KJV).

Earlier Jesus had said to His disciples: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" (John 6:62, KJV.) Later they did see just that (Acts 1:9). Notice John 7:33 (KJV): "Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me."

Concerning the occasion of

Christ's last Passover, John begins: "Now before the feast of the pass-over, when Jesus knew that his hour was [very soon to] come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father . . ." (John 13:1, KJV).

John repeats this vital theme over and over again. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father" (John 16:28, KJV).

**The Incredible Destiny of Man.** Jesus was God before His human birth; He was God in the flesh while a hu-

man being here on earth; and He is *now* very God at the right hand of the Father in heaven. But must we stop there in our knowledge?

Jesus said to Mary Magdalene: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (John 20:17, KJV).

In this verse, Jesus was equating Himself (though He was their Lord and Master—John 13:13) with His disciples and future apostles. What is the real significance of this statement? Jesus Himself gives us the true answer in John 10. "The Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, 'I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of these do you stone me?' The Jews answered him, 'We stone you for no good work but for blasphemy; *because you, being a man, make yourself God.*' Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I said, *you are gods*" [see Psalm 82:6]? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came (and scripture cannot be broken), do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am the Son of God"?' (John 10:34-36, RSV).

So the family of God will eventually be expanded to include all of mankind who choose to accept Christ as their Savior and follow God's way. Christians "now are . . . the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). I Corinthians 15:49, 53 (RSV) adds: "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust [Adam], we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven [Christ]. . . . For this mortal . . . must put on immortality." Here it says plainly that resurrected Christians are to be immortal like Christ. He is our elder brother (Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:11), the pioneer of our salvation (Heb. 2:10). When we are changed, our mortal bodies will become spirit bodies like His. He will make "our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself" (Phil. 3:20-21, RSV).

Notice John's first letter once again: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he [Christ] shall appear, *we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*" (I John 3:2, KJV). Can you grasp what John is saying here? Even as God became man, so man may become God! The two planes are interchangeable *under certain conditions*.

Man is to become just as much God as Christ is God. That in a nutshell is the transcendent purpose of human life!

What can every man and woman do to ensure that this wonderful event does indeed happen to them? Verse 3: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure" (KJV). □

## The Oneness of God

Jesus said, as recorded in John 10:30: "I and my Father are one." Now please read carefully John 17:21, where He prayed for His followers: "that they *all* may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us . . ."

There is one Godhead, or one God family, who are of one mind and purpose. But that family is now composed of two individuals, God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. This is clearly stated in John 1:1 (RSV): "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The "Word," or "Spokesman," refers to the One who later became Jesus Christ (see verse 14).

Hebrews 1 also shows conclusively that Christ was and is now God: "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; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:1-3). God says of Christ: "Let all the angels of God worship him" (verse 6). Only a member of the God family is worthy of worship.

But the God family is not limited to God the Father and Jesus Christ: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God . . ." (John 1:12). And this does not mean an existence on some sort of angelic plane, either. Hebrews 2:7 (RSV) shows that mankind, like Christ, was made "for a little while lower than the angels," but that he is to be "crowned with glory and honor." "Everything" is to be put "in subjec-

tion under his feet." But, "As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him," because the resurrection to immortality hasn't occurred yet.

When Christ said He and the Father were one, and that He was equal with God, the Jews accused Him of blasphemy. Here is what he replied: "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, you are [potentially] gods? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came (and scripture cannot be broken), do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?" (John 10:34-36, RSV).

For more information on this subject, request our free booklet "Why Were You Born?"



# JUST WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

***What does it do and how do you get it? The Holy Spirit, according to the organized religions of this world, is the third person in the Godhead. BUT IS THAT TRUE?***

**M**ORE than a billion PEOPLE—nearly ONE-THIRD of the *entire population of the world*—believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. It is one of the few MAJOR doctrines upon which virtually *all* professing Christendom, Protestant and Catholic alike, basically agree.

**Nebulous Foundation.** The belief in the Trinity is often said to be the *heart and core*—“the CENTRAL doctrine of the Christian religion” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, article “Trinity”). It is the one point of doctrine where there is the *most agreement*. Yet in spite of the great universal agreement, it is still one of the most DIFFICULT-TO-EXPLAIN doctrines of professing Christianity.

World-renowned evangelists have been quoted as saying that the Holy Spirit, the supposed third person of the Godhead, “is not easy to explain in nontheological terms.” Or, “In actuality, the doctrine of the Trinity is A MYSTERY.” No one can possibly understand the “three in one.” When pointedly questioned concerning the belief in a Triune or three-in-one God, the answer is in effect—WHO KNOWS? It is something *we must accept in faith*.

“The mind of man cannot fully understand the mystery of the Trinity. He who would try to understand the mystery fully will lose his mind. But he who would deny the Trinity will lose his soul” (Harold Lindell and Charles J. Woodbridge, *A Handbook of Christian Truth*, pp. 51-52).

**No Mystery to the Apostles.** The Bible speaks of the plan of salvation as being a mystery (Greek *mysterion*, meaning something now revealed that was previously un-

known). But that doesn’t mean that God’s truths are a MYSTERY to *those whom He is calling to salvation*. Open your Bible to Mark 4:11. Jesus Christ of Nazareth, one of the very members of the Godhead, is here speaking to His disciples. He has just given the multitude the parable of the sower and the seed, and after the multitude left, His disciples came to Him for the interpretation of the parable. “And he said unto them, Unto *you* it is given TO KNOW the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto *them* that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, *and not understand*; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.”

Jesus Christ is *plainly*, clearly and pointedly showing that the truths of God, the doctrines of salvation or the very *words of life* are a mystery TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT BEING CALLED. Only those who are His very own disciples are privileged to KNOW THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. His truth, His way and His teachings aren’t “mysterious, hard-to-define, etc.” to His people. He only spoke in clouded, ambiguous terms to the unconverted.

The same applies today!

Jesus Christ never at any time in any way thought, hinted or alluded to the Holy Spirit as a third person in the Godhead. There is absolutely no basis or PROOF whatsoever in the Bible for the worldwide acceptance of the teaching of the Trinity. Even the erudite writers of the Catholic Encyclopedia must confess that, “the passages which can be cited . . . as

attesting to His [the Holy Spirit’s] distinct personality are few” (*ibid.*).

Should you just accept “in faith” one of the most important beliefs in Christianity? Christians are commanded to, “Prove ALL things . . .” (I Thess. 5:21). Universal acceptance or reasonability ARE NOT PROOFS of *any* doctrine. GOD’S WORD, the Bible, is the test of any doctrinal truth—not what MEN say, think or believe. Jesus Christ said, “. . . Thy word is TRUTH” (John 17:17). He also said in another place, “The word that I [Jesus] have spoken, the same shall judge him [you] in the last day” (John 12:48).

**What Do You Mean—Trinity?**

“The Trinity is . . . the truth that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit . . . The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet these are not three Gods, but one God . . . co-eternal and co-equal: all alike or uncreated and omnipotent” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, article “Trinity”).

That is a pretty positive statement. Where is their authority to back it up?

One source often referred to by Catholic and Protestant alike is the old stand-by—TRADITION. Ancient writers and “early Church fathers” are quoted, often misquoted, to show that for centuries this doctrine has been taught. But not all professing Christians believed it.

Let the record speak for itself.

“We cannot doubt the existence among orthodox Fathers of *different opinions* on this *mysterious* subject until its final definition by the

## A Simple Lesson in Grammar

Somebody is going to ask: "What about the fact that John uses the personal pronoun 'he' when referring to the Holy Spirit or Comforter in the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of his Gospel?"

In the Greek language, like the Romance languages (Spanish, Italian, French, etc.), every noun has what is called gender; that is, it is either masculine, feminine or neuter.

Even such an inanimate object as a glass—being utterly devoid of any real life—has masculine gender in Spanish. *El vaso* is the Spanish equivalent of the two words "the glass" in English. The article "el" and the "o" ending to the word *vaso* give the word "glass" masculine gender in Spanish. Yet by no stretch of the imagination could a glass be considered a male person in the human sense. That would be ridiculous!

*La mesa* is the Spanish equivalent of the two English words "the table." The article "la" and the "a" ending give the word "table" (*mesa*) feminine gender in Spanish. Yet it would be ludicrous to consider a table as a human female personality.

Likewise in the Greek language, the gender of a word has nothing whatever to do with whether the thing designated is *really* masculine or feminine in the human sense at all. If it did—what a contradiction in the Bible itself! For in the Old Testament the Hebrew word for spirit—*ruach*—is usually feminine, and only rarely in a masculine form. Gender in language is really nothing more than a convenient grammatical tool. In the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of John, the English pronoun "he" is definitely used in connection with the word "Comforter"—but *not* for theological or spiritual reasons.

Grammatically, all pronouns in Greek *must agree* in gender with the word they refer to—or in other words, with the term that the pronoun replaces. The Greek word *parakletos* ("comforter" in English) has masculine gender; hence the translators' use of the personal pronoun "he" for the Greek pronouns *ekeinós* and *autos*. "It" would have been a far better rendering into the English language—just as in John 1:32 and 6:63, and Romans 8:16 for example.

## The Holy Spirit is the Power of God

The Holy Spirit is the *impersonal power* of God. A few of the scriptures on which we base this statement are Genesis 6:3; Job 33:4; Psalm 139:7; Isaiah 11:2, 42:1; 61:1; Ezekiel 36:27; 39:29; Luke 1:15, 35, 67; 11:13; John 20:22; Acts 4:8; 31; 13:9; 15:8; Romans 8:11; II Corinthians 1:22; II Peter 1:21.

Every work of God is accomplished through this great power (Matt. 3:11; Luke 2:26; John 1:33; 14:26; 20:22; Acts 1:2, 5, 8, 16; 2:33, 38; 4:8; 10:38, 44, 45). God used His great power to

create the heaven, the earth, men, and beasts (Gen. 1:1; Jer. 27:5; 51:15).

Since God has given this same Holy Spirit without measure to His only begotten Son, it is acknowledged that His works are done through this great power (Matt. 28:18; John 3:34). Jesus told His followers that the Comforter would proceed from God (John 15:26) and instructed them to wait at Jerusalem for power. Christians are kept by this power (I Pet. 1:5).

## The Holy Spirit in Symbols

Various symbols designate God's Holy Spirit in the Bible. Among them are breath (Gen. 2:7); oil (Psa. 45:7); fire (Matt. 3:11); dove (Matt. 3:16); wind (John 3:8); water (John 4:14; 7:37, 39); seal (Eph. 1:13); sword (Eph. 6:17) and lamps (Rev. 4:5).

The Holy Spirit's characteristics reveal it to be an impersonal power emanating from God. The Holy Spirit is poured out (Isa. 32:15; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17); shed (Titus 3:5, 6); breathed (John 20:22); fills people (Acts 2:4; Eph. 5:18); and anoints some (Acts 10:38).

If the Holy Spirit were a person, a member of a holy trinity, it would be impossible to understand and adequately explain the following scriptures:

1) "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath [or spirit] of his mouth" (Psa. 33:6).

2) "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost [Spirit] . . . if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance" (Heb. 6:4-6).

3) "When he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy [Spirit]" (John 20:22).

4) "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (John 3:34).

There is not one prayer, song, or exclamation of praise made to the Holy Spirit in God's Word! Men, however, compose and sing many songs

and hymns to the Holy Spirit, as though it were a person.

In the seventeen New Testament Epistles that begin with a greeting of grace and peace, there is only one greeting that contains a reference to the Holy Spirit, and then only as the means of sanctification (I Pet. 1:2), not as the source of grace. These invocations are appeals in the name of God and His Son, but not in that of the Holy Spirit. This is logical. All the writers, inspired by the Holy Spirit, the power of God, recognized that the Holy Spirit was not a person. It can be further observed that there are no mentions of the Holy Spirit in the eleven occurrences of thanksgiving or blessing which follow some of these salutations. Is it not evident that the God-breathed Word does not recognize the Holy Spirit as a person?

When Stephen, being full of the Holy Spirit, was martyred, he saw the heavens opened and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55, 56). No mention is made of the Holy Spirit's presence in this eventful scene in heaven.

In the Book of Revelation, it is recorded that John beheld God upon His throne, a group of elders, the Lamb of God, four beasts, a strong angel, and many other angels around the throne, singing a new song to the Son of God concerning the Lamb who was slain and has redeemed us to God by His blood (5:9). If the Holy Spirit were a person, and equal to God would he not be present, and sitting on the throne? Other similar scenes are recorded in which the Holy Spirit is not pictured, such as in Rev. 7:10.

Church" ("Trinity," *Dictionary of Doctrinal and Historical Theology*).

An interesting aspect which is often blatantly overlooked is that many of those to whom they now refer as believing in the "blessed Trinity," were *anathematized* for their beliefs. They were considered heretics in their day and completely disfellowshipped because of their heretical beliefs. It wasn't until the Council of Chalcedon, in 451 A.D., that the doctrine of the Trinity finally and permanently became the official formula of Catholic orthodoxy.

But the story began a great deal earlier.

The as yet unformed germ of the Trinity idea may be found in such early Christian "Fathers" as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian and Irenaeus—about two hundred years after Christ. But the idea of triune gods was not new. The ancient

pagans were quite familiar with triads or trinities of gods, and it is possible, indeed likely, that pagan thought would have had some influence on the developing doctrine of the church.

The first official standing of the Trinity doctrine was given in the decrees of the great Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325. This council was called together by the Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great, who saw in the church a coveted pillar of stability for his rule, and that of his descendants. But seeking to achieve that state of stability, he insisted that all Christians should agree on and subscribe to a common unified belief, including of course a common view of the nature of God.

It was the formulation for the Trinity of Athanasius, an Egyptian deacon from Alexandria that was adopted by the council.

"The Alexandrian catechetical

school, which revered Clement of Alexandria and Origen, the greatest theologians of the Greek Church, as its heads, applied the allegorical method to the explanation of Scripture. *Its thought was influenced by Plato: its strong point was theological speculation.* Athanasius and the three Cappadocians had been included among its members . . ." (*Ecumenical councils of the Catholic Church*, by Hubert Jedin, p. 29).

Many were opposed to the creed as adopted. They were led by the priest Arius and others. For Arius standardization soon led to excommunication and banishment. But it was not long before he was back, with Constantine's backing and favor, and soon it was Athanasius' turn to be expelled. Constantine himself, of course, knew little and cared less about the truth of the matter in dispute.

The seesaw continued. Athanasius

## Paul Did Not Recognize the Trinity

The Apostle Paul would probably be considered a blasphemer by many Trinitarians today, because in his greetings to the churches he neglected to mention the Holy Spirit. In his introduction to the Romans, he represents himself as an apostle of God the Father and Jesus Christ, but nothing is said about any third person.

He also neglects to mention the Holy Spirit in the greetings of the rest of his letters. His standard greeting is: "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:3). The same greeting is repeated in II Corinthians 1:3, Galatians 1:3, Ephesians 1:2, Philipians 1:2, Colossians 1:2, I Thessalonians 1:1, II Thessalonians 1:2, I Timothy 1:2, Titus 1:4, and Philemon 1:3.

All of these greetings are without variation: the Holy Spirit is consistently left out, a great oversight, almost blasphemy—provided the Trinity doctrine is correct—and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is called the unpardonable sin (Matt. 12:32).

Only in II Corinthians 13:14 is the Holy Spirit mentioned with God and Jesus and there only in connection with communion or fellowship. The Holy Spirit is not the third member of the Godhead.

In Romans 8:17, Paul identified Christians as heirs of the Father and heirs of Christ, but said nothing about us being heirs of the Holy Spirit. In I Corinthians, Christians belong to Christ as Christ belongs to God, but no one is said to belong to the Holy Spirit.

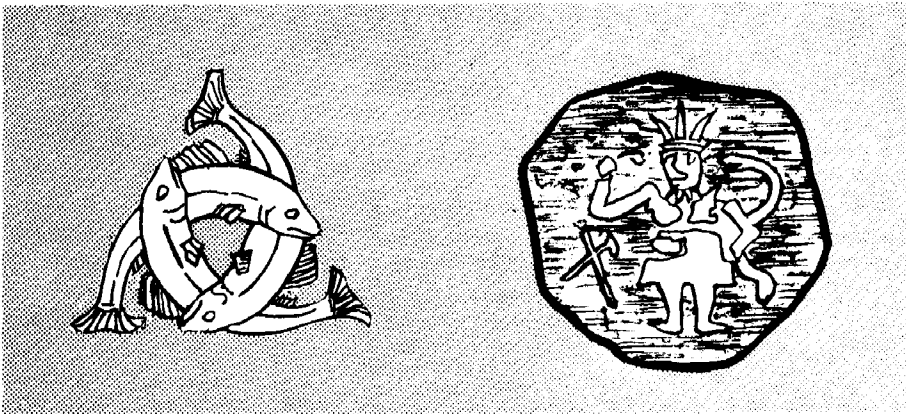
it. In I Corinthians 11:3, the man is the head (leader in authority) of the woman, Christ is the head of the man, and God the head of Christ. But nowhere does the Holy Spirit—as a person—fit in!

Ephesians 5:5 mentions the kingdom of God along with the kingdom of Christ, but never a kingdom of the Holy Spirit. Yet it was this very omission, in the Middle Ages, coupled with the prevailing belief in the Holy Spirit as a person of a Trinity, that gave rise to a major heresy within the Catholic Church. Falsely believing that the Church itself was the kingdom, and since by then the Church had endured more than a thousand years, many people fell for a sort of wildfire, "Spiritual" religion proclaiming the eminent age or kingdom of the Holy Spirit—which idea would indeed logically follow if the Holy Spirit were a person. In fairness to the Catholic Church it must be said that this doctrine was quickly branded a heresy.

In Colossians 3:1, Paul wrote of Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father. But why was the Holy Spirit, if a person, not sitting there too?

But surely I Timothy 2:5 is a clincher: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." This means that not even the Holy Spirit—sent to earth specifically to aid and dwell within human beings—is a mediator. Why—if the Holy Spirit is a person?

All these scriptures and many more disprove the teaching that the Holy Spirit is a person.



LEFT: Three intertwined fish are a symbol representing the trinity widely used in European churches. RIGHT: Agni, the Hindu god of fire is shown wearing a tiara with three leaves representing a triune god. The fleur-de-lis, the shamrock or clover leaf, the equilateral triangle and numerous other symbols are even today held by many to represent a tripartite God.

was exiled three or four times and brought back again. More conferences were held, some deciding one thing, some another. The one thread that ran consistently through it all was politics, striving for power, and strife. And perhaps the real reason that trinitarianism ever prevailed was simply that the majority were

not ready to declare that Christ was originally a created being, as maintained by Arius, or merely an ordinary man before being anointed by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, as maintained by others.

It was not until the Council of Chalcedon at the midpoint of the fifth century that the trinitarian

creed was permanently and irrevocably rooted in Catholicism. Even so, individuals and groups have continued to hold differing opinions throughout the ages ever since.

**The Holy Spirit is God's Power.** Matthew 28:19-20 is often cited by the advocates of the Trinity to prove the Holy Spirit is a separate individual.

What this verse actually shows is that when we are baptized, we are inducted into a FAMILY. When we are baptized into the name of God, we are simply being baptized into the family of God.

All that is shown by the mentioning of the Holy Spirit in this verse is that the Holy Spirit also BELONGS TO THE GOD FAMILY. It is the essence or power of God. And just as the seed of life or spermatozoon of a man engenders a child and makes that child his, so God uses His Spirit to engender us, upon baptism, into His family and make us His begotten children.

The Holy Spirit then is the power of God which emanates from God. Since this power belongs to God, it is

## The Spirit of God Throughout the Bible

The personality of Jesus Christ is thoroughly provable from the Bible, but there is no such proof for a personality of the Holy Spirit.

"The OT [Old Testament] clearly does not envisage God's spirit as a person, neither in the strictly philosophical sense, nor in the Semitic sense. God's spirit is simply God's Power. If it is sometimes represented as being distinct from God, it is because the breath of Yahweh acts exteriorly (Isa. 48:16; 63:11; 32:15)." So say the authors of the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Continuing:

"Very rarely do the OT writers attribute to God's spirit emotions or intellectual activity (Isa. 63:10; Wis. 1:3-7). When such expressions are used, they are mere figures of speech that are explained by the fact that the *rūah* was regarded also as the seat of intellectual acts and feeling (Gen. 41:8). Neither is there found in the OT or in rabbinical literature the notion that God's spirit is an intermediary being between God and the world. This activity is proper to the angels, although to them is ascribed some of

the activity that elsewhere is ascribed to the spirit of God" (*New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, p. 574).

In the Old Testament, God's Spirit is pictured as His power. The power by which the One who became Jesus Christ, as Executive for the Father, created the entirety of the universe. These theologians also recognize that when the Spirit is spoken of as a person or in a personal way, the Bible writer is merely *personifying* the Spirit, as he would wisdom or any other attribute.

Now what about the New Testament? They say:

"Although the NT [New Testament] concepts of the Spirit of God are largely a continuation of those of the OT, in the NT there is a gradual revelation that the Spirit of God is a person."

But this would seem true only if you are armed with a preconceived notion that God is a Trinity, and there are only a few scriptures that can even remotely be construed as presenting the Spirit as a person, in each case only as the result of a grammatical misunderstanding.

But again let's let the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* continue:

"The majority of NT texts reveal God's spirit as something, not someone; this is especially seen in the parallelism between the spirit and the power of God."

Though theologians would like the Bible to say that the Spirit is a person, they must admit that the majority of the scriptures connected with it show that it is *not someone*, but something. Even the personification of the Spirit is no proof of its personality.

"When a quasi-personal activity is ascribed to God's spirit, e.g., speaking, hindering, desiring, dwelling (Acts 8:29; 16:7; Rom. 8:9), one is not justified in concluding immediately that in these passages God's spirit is regarded as a Person; the same expressions are used in regard to rhetorically personified things or abstract ideas (see Rom. 6:6; 7:17). Thus the context of the phrase 'blasphemy against the spirit' (Mt. 12:31; cf. Mt. 12:28; Luke 11:20) shows that reference is being made to the power of God" (*New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, p. 575).

also found to be with all His sons, and to be the joining force which makes them a family.

The truth of the matter in this verse is positive proof of the *family relationship* of God. It has nothing whatsoever to do with a triune God.

**What the Power of God Can Do.** God is power! His power is the Holy Spirit. It is the power of God or Spirit of God by which all things were created in the very beginning.

How can this be? Genesis 1:1 says: "In the beginning GOD CREATED..." Does that mean that God Himself had to fashion the whole creation with His own hands? No! God the Father didn't do the creating personally. Christ was the one who did the actual creating of all things (John 1:3). This truth is again demonstrated in Hebrews 1:2. Here it says, referring to Christ, "... by whom also he made the worlds."

Does this then mean that it was Jesus Christ only who fashioned all things? Again the answer is no. The word for God in Genesis 1:1 is *Elohim* which is plural in form and thus can signify a plurality or *family relationship* between the Father and Son.

The *God family* planned the creation, long before it ever took place. Each and every detail was carefully thought out. Just as a contractor will have blueprints drawn up long before he ever lays the foundation for a large construction job, so the family of God planned the universe. After all planning was completed, Jesus Christ executed the plans, through the *power* which is the Holy Spirit. That doesn't mean that a third party took over and did the job. It simply means the work was done by the power or spirit or authority of the God family.

Take the Panama Canal for example. We say the United States built the Panama Canal. Did all forty-eight, as it then was, of the states go down to the Isthmus of Panama and do the work? Of course not. It was done by the authority and power of the United States. The men, money and power of the United States caused the canal to come into being. In that way, the United States did the job. An exact parallel.


**The Holy Spirit is Omnipresent.** In both the Greek New Testament and

## The influence of Hellenistic thought

The Hellenistic (Greek-culture) world, through the influence of Judaism and philosophical criticism of the old state cults, was turning away in disgust or disparagement from polytheism to various forms of monotheism. In such a world the Christian-professing Church of the first four centuries seems to have felt under considerable strain to avoid the charge of polytheism, especially in the light of its Jewish heritage. Yet the New Testament texts forced the church to recognize Jesus as fully divine and pre-existent as God: hence at least two God-beings.

But were there three? A Trinity?

In Hellenistic thought, many abstract or impersonal concepts were personalized in speaking or writing. Qualities, attributes and powers such as Wisdom, Love, the Holy Spirit were spoken of as if they had thought and volition of their own. And so, in the Greek New Testament, we find the Holy Spirit so spoken of. This made it truly difficult for the uneducated and novices in the things of God to understand. Not knowing what the Holy Spirit of God really was and is, many came to wrongly assume it to be a third person.



**YES, the Bible CAN be understood! Find out how easy it is by enrolling in the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course. To receive the twelve *free* monthly lessons just send your request to one of the addresses on the back page.**

the Hebrew Old Testament, the words for spirit also mean air, wind, atmosphere. And like the atmosphere on earth, the power of God is everywhere. That is how Jesus was able to do all the work of the creation by Himself. David's prayer in Psalm 139:7-8 shows that he knew God's Spirit or power was omnipresent. No matter where in the universe you might go, God's Spirit will still be there. That is how Jesus Christ is "... upholding all things by the word of his POWER" (Heb. 1:3). By His authority as God, He keeps all things in the universe in their place. This work is done through the power of the God family and with the express consent of the Father.

Though the Father is SUPREME in the God Family, as witnessed to by

Christ Himself (John 14:28), Jesus is the administrator of the Holy Spirit (John 15:26). He is greater than that Spirit. These two Scriptures alone nullify and make void the supposition that the Holy Spirit is a person of equal rank with the Father and the Son. The Spirit is the *very power of God*—the agent by which He does His will. IT IS NOT ANOTHER PERSON!

**It is a Gift.** This power of God can be yours as a free gift if you will only meet the preordained requirements. Once you have repented and been baptized, God gives you the free *gift* of His Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

If the Holy Spirit were a person, God is being rather presumptuous to go around giving a part of that person to whomever He chooses. Again in speaking about the gift of the Spir-

it, God says that in the last days He will pour out His Spirit, which belongs to Him, upon all mankind (Acts 2:17). The meaning of the Greek here is to literally pour out as you would water from a pitcher.

How can you pour out a person? YOU CAN'T! It is impossible!

**What Are Its Functions?** We are to learn what God is planning by observing the happenings here on earth (Rom. 1:20). Everywhere we look we can see each animal, bird, microbe and plant reproducing itself. In Genesis 1:26, God (*Elohim*) is quoted as saying: "... Let us make man in OUR IMAGE..." *God is reproducing Himself!* How very plain that should be to us rational, *thinking* individuals. We humans ARE TO BE MADE IN THE VERY IMAGE OF GOD! We are to become "Gods" ourselves.

The Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, unites with our minds and we are BEGOTTEN AGAIN—this time spiritually as we were once begotten physically. Read it in your own Bible.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath BEGOTTEN US AGAIN unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Pet. 1:3). In verse 23, it says, "Being BEGOTTEN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (Panin translation).

The Holy Spirit impregnates us with the God nature. That spiritual begettall imbues us with the nature and mind of God. Throughout our Christian lives we continue to grow and develop in the understanding and mind of God until we are finally born INTO the God family and made immortal at the return of Jesus Christ to this earth (I Cor. 15:49-52). We will then *rule* this earth as God's sons.

**Why the Deception?** Why has Satan palmed off the doctrine of the Trinity on the world? Because he doesn't want YOU to rule in his place. Satan was originally created to carry out God's rule on earth. He rebelled and refused to serve the Creator and was cast out of his position of responsibility (Ezek. 28:11-19 and Isa. 14:12-14). A third of the angels united with Lucifer in that rebellion and were CAST DOWN TO THIS EARTH WITH HIM—having forever DISQUAL-

## To Whom Did Jesus Pray?

Can we apply a little plain old biblical "horse sense" to this time-honored doctrine of a three-person God-head? Consider this completely unshakable biblical fact: Jesus Christ of Nazareth—your Savior—was conceived *not* by a human father as all other human beings (excepting Adam and Eve)—but by the Holy Spirit.

A great angelic being appeared to Joseph, Jesus' legal father, in a dream and said: "... Fear not to take thee Mary thy wife: for that which is *conceived* in her is of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1:20; cf. verse 18). Perhaps the very same angel—in this case the archangel Gabriel (Luke 1:26)—was sent with a similar message to the virgin Mary.

Notice carefully *the wording* of their conversation. "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, *thou shalt conceive* in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus" (verses 30-31).

Mary's reply was just exactly what you would expect of a woman in that situation. "Then said Mary unto the angel, *How shall this be*, seeing I know *not* a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The *Holy Spirit* shall come upon thee, and *the power of the Highest* [this is the real biblical definition of the Holy Spirit; it is a force or power] *shall overshadow thee*: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. ... For with

God nothing shall be impossible" (verses 34-35, 37).

So if we want to believe the Bible, we are forced to admit that Jesus Christ was conceived *through the agency of the Holy Spirit*.

Yet Jesus calls *God* His Father—not the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ said to Mary Magdalene in the book of John: "... go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto *my Father*, and your Father; *and to my God*, and your God" (John 20:17).

Can you begin to see how utterly illogical the concept of the Trinity is? *If the Holy Spirit were a person*, "he" would be Jesus' father—not God the Father. Yet Christ dogmatically stated, as you have just read, that *God is His Father*.

Consider further. *If the Holy Spirit were a person*, Jesus Christ prayed to the wrong "father." Since Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit, *if the Holy Spirit were a person*, Jesus' father would be the Holy Spirit. But throughout the four Gospel accounts, we find Christ praying directly to His Father—God Almighty! Just one example: "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. ... And this is life eternal, that they might know thee *the only true God* [still talking to the Father], and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:1,3).

# Is the Holy Spirit a Person?

Is the Holy Spirit a *person*, just like God the Father and Jesus Christ, as the doctrine of the Trinity teaches? Let's examine the plain, clear testimony of Scripture to see what God's Holy Spirit is.

First, it is the *power* of God. "Not by might, nor by power [of humans], but *by my spirit*, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). "I am full of *power* by the Spirit of the Lord, and judgment, and of *might* . . ." declared the prophet Micah (Micah 3:8).

Second, it is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear (deep reverence and respect—not terror) of the Lord (Isa. 11:2).

Third, it is a *gift*. After baptism, you are to receive "the *gift* of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). It is *poured* out. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:17). ". . . On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 10:45).

Fourth, to be effective the Holy Spirit must be *stirred* up. "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou *stir up* the gift of God," Paul reminded the young evangelist Timothy (II Tim. 1:6).

Fifth, the Spirit of God can be *quenched* (I Thes. 5:19).

Sixth, it is the *begetting* power of God (Matt. 1:18; Rom. 8:9).

Seventh, it is God's guarantee to us that He will fulfill His promise to us (Eph. 1:14).

Eighth, it sheds the love of God abroad *in* our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

Ninth, it must be *renewed* (2 Cor. 4:16).

Notice that in all of these scriptures there is not one characteristic even implying a "person."

Does a *person* do any of these things? Is a person "poured," "quenched," "renewed"? Does a person live in someone else or live in people's hearts?

For further evidence proving that the Holy Spirit is not a person, see Matthew 1:20. Here we read that Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Yet Christ calls *God* His Father, not the Holy Spirit (John 14:16). If the Holy Spirit were a person, it would be Christ's Father—proof positive that the Holy Spirit is not a person but the power God the Father uses—much as a man uses electricity.

Consider further. If the Holy Spirit were a person, Jesus Christ prayed to the wrong individual. Throughout the four Gospels, we find Christ speaking to God—not the Holy Spirit—as His Father.

IFIED themselves and Satan from ruling in the Government of God.

Since they are disqualified, they don't want anyone else to take what had once been their place. They have tried for nearly 6000 years now to hide from all the world the breath-taking TRUTH OF GOD. If they can make you believe in the Trinity, you will be deceived into thinking that the Godhead consists of *only* three persons. You would then never in your wildest dreams ever imagine that YOU were created to be born into the GOD FAMILY and actually share in ruling the universe.

Satan wants you to think that God

is a limited Trinity and not a *growing* family or Kingdom into which we may enter. If we look upon the Godhead as being a closed unit, we won't WORK and STRIVE to qualify for that family.

Anyway you want to look at it, the Trinity idea is a false and inadequate view of God. If anyone wants to say that the Trinity is merely three aspects or manifestations of one God, he is taking personhood away from Christ. But if the Holy Spirit is a person, it (or he) could not be placed as the character and the seed of God into many different human beings to beget and bring each of them individually to birth as

"many sons." And if someone would argue that this could occur—on the ground that with God anything is possible—this is actually making the Holy Spirit to be the Father, which is once more, equivalent to making the Holy Spirit not a separate person.

So there you have it. There is the truth about the Holy Spirit. God's family isn't closed to mankind as Satan would have you believe.

IT'S WIDE OPEN to you, your family and all mankind. If you accept the truth of God and obey Him, YOU can be made in the exact likeness of God at Christ's return. God wants it.

THE DECISION IS YOURS! □

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION . . .

Be sure to write for your free copies of the following publications:

*Why Were You Born?*

"How You Can Be Imbued with the Power of God"

"You Need God's Holy Spirit"

**MAILING ADDRESSES WORLDWIDE:**

**UNITED STATES**  
Worldwide Church of God  
P.O. Box 111  
Pasadena, California 91123

**UNITED KINGDOM,  
EIRE, EUROPE  
AND MIDDLE EAST**  
Ambassador College  
P.O. Box 111  
Saint Albans, Herts,  
England AL2 2EG

**CANADA**  
Ambassador College  
P.O. Box 44, Station A  
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2M2  
Canada

**CANADA**  
(French Language)  
Le Monde à Venir  
B.P. 121, Succ. A  
Montreal, P.Q. H3C 1C5  
Canada

**MEXICO**  
Institución Ambassador  
Apartado Postal 5-595  
Mexico 5, D.F. Mexico

**SOUTH AMERICA**  
Institución Ambassador  
Apartado Aéreo 11430  
Bogota 1, D.E., Colombia

**WEST INDIES**  
Worldwide Church of God  
G.P.O. Box 6063  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00936

**SWEDEN**  
The Plain Truth  
Box 5380, S-102 46  
Stockholm, Sweden

**FRANCE and SWITZERLAND**  
Le Monde à Venir  
Case Postale 10  
91 rue de la Servette  
1211 Genève 7  
Suisse

**GERMANY**  
Ambassador College  
Postfach 1129  
5300 Bonn 1  
West Germany

**HOLLAND AND BELGIUM**  
Ambassador College  
Postbus 333  
Utrecht, Nederland

**BELGIUM**  
Le Monde à Venir  
B.P. 31  
6000 Charleroi 1,  
Belgique

**DENMARK**  
The Plain Truth  
Box 211  
DK-8100 Arhus C  
Denmark

**NORWAY**  
The Plain Truth  
Box 2513 Solli  
Oslo 2, Norway

**AUSTRALIA, INDIA  
SRI LANKA, SOUTH-EAST ASIA**  
Worldwide Church of God  
P.O. Box 202  
Burleigh Heads  
Queensland, Australia 4220

**NEW ZEALAND  
AND THE PACIFIC ISLES**  
Ambassador College  
P.O. Box 2709  
Auckland 1, New Zealand

**THE PHILIPPINES**  
Ambassador College Agency  
P.O. Box 2603  
Manila 2801, Philippines

**ISRAEL**  
Ambassador College  
P.O. Box 19111  
Jerusalem, Israel

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
Ambassador College  
P.O. Box 1060  
Johannesburg  
Republic of South Africa 2000

**RHODESIA**  
Ambassador College  
Box UA30, Union Avenue  
Salisbury, Rhodesia

**NIGERIA**  
Worldwide Church of God  
PMB 1006  
35 Akinola Cole Crescent  
Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria

**GHANA**  
Worldwide Church of God  
P.O. Box 9617  
Kotoka International Airport  
Accra, Ghana

**KENYA**  
Worldwide Church of God  
P.O. Box 47135  
Nairobi, Kenya

**MAURITIUS  
AND SEYCHELLES**  
Ambassador College  
P.O. Box 888  
Port Louis, Mauritius

THIS REPRINT IS PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE BY THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST. It is made possible by the voluntary, freely given tithes and offerings of the membership of the Church and others who have elected to support the work of the Church. Contributions are welcomed and gratefully accepted. Those who wish to voluntarily aid and support this worldwide Work of God are gladly welcomed as co-workers in this major effort to preach the gospel to all nations.

This Reprint Series has been reprinted from publications of the Worldwide Church of God.

Printed in U.S.A.

13

**WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD**

P.O. Box 111, Pasadena, California 91123

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

PASADENA, CALIF.  
PERMIT NO. 703