

A Trinity Questioned

Introduction

Compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, 1996
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Scripture is from the NKJV unless otherwise noted

Each believer must decide for himself what he will believe, based upon his own study of Scripture with prayer. The writings, questions or commentary of other Christians should be valued as stimulating thought and growth. No human being should set himself up as the expositor of absolute truth in the things of God, and it is not my intent to do so in this study. We all “see through a glass darkly.” I offer my opinion, with supporting arguments - nothing more.

I want to make it very clear that I believe Christ our Lord is divine and worthy of worship. He is not a created being. He was “begotten” - not created. I do believe that Christ had a beginning, meaning that He has not always existed. He was begotten before time was created. He was begotten as a Being with an identity or self, separate from that of God His Father, yet the two are “one” because they share a common spirit.

A human being is human by nature, and is made of the same DNA substance as were his human ancestors. Just so - before His incarnation, Christ was of the same (divine) nature and substance as His divine Father - God. As such, Christ could then, and can now, be called God (meaning divine being).

“Who has ascended into heaven, or descended?

Who has gathered the wind in His fists?

Who has bound the waters in a garment?

Who has established all the ends of the earth?

What is His name, and what is His Son’s name, if you know?”

Proverbs 30:4 NKJV

A TRINITY?

1. **There is no statement in Scripture that there are three coequal, coeternal divine beings (Triune God). There is also no statement that God is one divine being who manifests in three ways - as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (Trinitarianism).**
2. **Scripture never uses the word Trinity or triune, in reference to God.**
3. Christ referred to God as “the Father” and “My Father”. The New Testament writers refer to “God our Father” many, many times, but no Bible writer, ever referred to Christ as “God the Son,” or to the Holy Spirit as “God the Holy Spirit.” Christ is divine (*John 1:1-3*). He is divine because He was begotten from the Father who is divine. The Son of God was to be worshiped by angels (*Heb. 1:6*) and by men (*Phil. 2:10*). The Father of course, is called “God our Father” (*Rom. 1:7, 1Co. 1:3, 2Co. 1:2, Eph. 1:2, Phi. 1:2, Col. 1:2, 1Th. 1:1, 2Th. 1:1, 2Th. 1:2, 1Ti. 1:2, Phm. 1:3*).

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT WORSHIPED

4. I have found no command in Scripture that we are to exalt, glorify, give thanks to, pray to, or in any other way “worship” the Holy Spirit. There is no account of any created being offering worship to the Holy Spirit by name. We are to worship the Father “in spirit and in truth” (*John 4:23*).

Revelation 5:13 “And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth . . . I heard saying, ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!’”

In the New Testament Scriptures, two divine beings are worshiped - the Father and His Son.

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CHRIST NEVER PRAYED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

5. Christ prayed only to His Father, and never spoke to another divine being by name. He instructed His disciples to pray to the Father, “in My name”(Matthew 6:10, John 15:16, John 16:23).
6. We are to pray *for* the spirit, never *to* the spirit. The Holy Spirit is the gift.

Luke 11:13 “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

Acts 2:33 “Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He [Christ] poured out this which you now see and hear.”

Christ “received” the Spirit of His Father, which enabled Him to then pour out this power and presence upon the waiting disciples. They experienced the spirit as Christ Himself - “with” them.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS “HIS SPIRIT”

7. Singular pronouns indicating possession, source or relation, are used extensively with the word spirit throughout Scripture. The Holy Spirit is called “**His spirit**,” “**My spirit**,” “**the spirit of the Lord**,” “**the spirit of God**,” “**the spirit of Him**” or “**Your spirit**.” This suggests that the Holy Spirit is the omnipresence and power of the Father and/or of Christ. In Matthew 12:18, Luke 4:18, and Romans 8:11, the Spirit is “the Spirit of the Father.” 1 Peter 1:10-11 refers to the “Spirit of Christ” as the inspiration of Old Testament prophets.

THE FATHER IS THE SUPREME SOVEREIGN GOD

8. Jesus called His Father “**the only true God**” (John 17:3).
9. Paul said, “**There is One God, the Father**, of Whom are all things, AND One Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things” (1Corinthians 8:6). He also wrote, “**one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all**” (Ephesians 4:6).
10. **We were created by the Father, through the Son** (1Cor.8:6, Eph.3:9, Col.1:12-16, Heb.1:1-3).

Ephesians 3:14,15 [Paul writing] “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ’ of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.”

“HE IS GOD”

11. In Scripture, God is referred to using singular pronouns such as He, His or Him. “Fear God, and give glory to *Him*, for the hour of *His* judgment is come” (*Revelation 14:7*).

THE GOD OF CHRIST

12. **The Father is the God of Christ** (*Jn. 20:17, Rom. 15:6, 1Cor. 11:3, 2Cor. 1:3, 2Cor. 11:31, Eph. 1:3, Eph. 1:17, Col. 1:3, Heb. 1:9, 1Pet 1:3, Rev. 1:6*). The following statement was made by Christ to John, many years after Pentecost 31AD.

Revelation 3:12 “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.”

THE FATHER’S WILL IS SUPREME

13. “There is one Lawgiver . . .” (*James 4:12*).

14. “The head of Christ is God” (*1 Cor. 11:3*).

Christ will be subordinate to His Father for all eternity (*1 Corinthians 15:24-28*).
The kingdom of heaven, was called by Christ, “My Father’s kingdom” (*Matthew 26:29*).

There is no mention of “the Spirit’s kingdom.”

“Our Father ... **Thine is the kingdom**” (*Matthew 6:13*).

When all is done, Christ the Son will deliver the kingdom to God His Father (1 Cor. 15:24). He will be subject to His Father (1 Cor. 15:28), who is God over all, the Head of all things.

WE ARE RECONCILED TO THE FATHER

15. **We are reconciled to the Father through the Son** (*Col 1:19-20*).

16. Jesus said, “If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father” (*John 14:8-9*).

He did not say, “You have also seen the Spirit” because the Spirit is the power and presence of the Father. The Father is Spirit, but also appears in a form which can be “seen” by His created beings. He “sits” on a throne. He holds a scroll in His right hand (Rev. 5:1,7).

17. **Christ was “sent by the Father”** (*John 5:23, 5:30, 5:36, 5:37, 6:39, 6:44, 6:57, 8:16, 8:29, 8:42, 10:36, 12:49, 17:21, 20:21, 1John 4:14*).

Never did Christ say that He was sent by the Spirit.

The Father glorified Christ, the Father gave Christ authority, the Father is the “Only True God,” the Father sent Christ, the Father was glorified by Christ, the Father assigned Christ His work, and Christ existed with the Father before the world was (*John 17:1-5*).

THE FATHER GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

18. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” (*John 3:16*).

1 John 1:3 “Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, in truth and love.”

Why call Him “the Son,” if He was not really a Son at all, but simply took the role of a son, or was manifest as a son - but was not in fact, “begotten.”

CHRIST WAS THE LITERAL SON - OF GOD THE FATHER

19. **Proverbs 8:22-30** is a part of a corollary on wisdom. Christ is called “the wisdom of God” (*1 Cor. 1:24,30*). (The “word” of God in John 1:1-3 is the same concept to a Hebrew as “the wisdom” of God.) The speaker of Proverbs 8 says, “I was brought forth.” This the same Hebrew expression used to say “I was born.” (*Also see: Job 15:7-8*.) Many believe the writer of Proverbs Chapter 8 was speaking under inspiration as Christ - speaking of His pre-incarnate existence.

John 16:27 [Christ said] “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world.”

John 17:8 [Christ prayed] “I came forth from You [Father] and they have believed that You sent Me.”

Matthew 16:16-18 [Peter] “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,”
[Jesus replied] “Upon this rock I will build my church.”

NOTE: The church (congregation) is built upon the identity of Christ - upon the fact that He was and is “the Son of the living God”. The church was NOT built on a man named Peter!

ONLY ONE MEDIATOR

20. "There is only one mediator between God and men" (1Timothy 2:5).

*If we say that God the Father communicates with us through Christ, who then communicates with us through the Holy Spirit (who is also God), then Christ no longer mediates between God and man. This arrangement **inserts the Holy Spirit** as mediator between Christ and man.*

If we say that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are three manifestations of the same Divine Being, then there is no mediator between God and man.

SALVATION BELONGS TO THE FATHER AND THE SON

21. Revelation 7:10 "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"

TWO DIVINE BEINGS THE FATHER AND HIS SON

22. We "abide in the Son and in the Father" (1John 2:24).

23. "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son" (1John 1:3).

Jesus said, "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30). He prayed that those who believed would also be "one" with the Father and Himself (John 17:11,21,22,23). Christ did not say that He was also "one" with the Spirit, or that we would ever be "one" with the Holy Spirit, as if to say the Spirit is a third divine being.

24. The Father forgives (Matt 6:12,14,15). Christ also forgives sin, because He received all authority from His Father, (John 5:22, 27; Matt 28:18) but nowhere in Scripture do we read that we are forgiven by the Holy Spirit.

25. John 17:1 & 3 "Jesus spoke these words lifted His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father [*first person*] the hour is come. Glorify Your Son [*second person*] that Your Son also may glorify You [*first person*], . . . And this is eternal life, that they may know You [*first person*], the only true God, and Jesus Christ [*second person*] Whom You [*first person*] have sent.'"

26. If Christ was not a separate being from His Father, then He prayed to Himself to be delivered from death (*Luke 22:42*). When He said, “Not my will but Yours be done.” Does this not signify that there were two individual wills, and therefore two separate beings? He said, “I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me” (*John 6:38*).
27. All of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in the Father and the Son (*Col. 2:2-3*).
28. Ten times in the New Testament, Paul wrote “**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**” It is hard to believe that it was an oversight on his part, not to have mentioned the Spirit also in these passages, if the Holy Spirit is indeed a third divine being.

THE FATHER ONLY

29. Christ stated that no one, not even the Son Himself, knew the day or the hour of His return to earth, but the “Father only” (*Matt. 24:36*).

How could the Son not “know” if He was a manifestation of one divine being who is omniscient? How could the Spirit not have known - if He is a third co-equal divine being?

This statement was true at the time it was spoken. I am quite sure that the Son NOW knows.

THE TRINITY IS CONFUSING.

30. “God so loved the world that He [singular] gave His [singular] only begotten Son” (*John 3:16*).

If “God” is one divine being who manifests in three ways, then HE could not have given HIS “begotten” Son. He could manifest as a begotten Son. He could give part of Himself (or a manifestation of Himself).

If “God” is three co-equal divine beings, then one of that Trinity could assume the role of a Son, but you could not say that a Father “gave His Son.”

Did the Apostolic writers intend to mislead? I think not! I understand the Bible as it reads. Jesus Christ was and is the begotten Son of God our Father. That is who He is. That understanding is the foundation of our faith.

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS

Perhaps no one section of this study, by itself, would convince the reader that God is, or is not a Trinity. It is the cumulative weight of all the arguments together, which I believe urges the view.

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