

03 | Three

The Trio of One



Introduction

You may have heard God described as “the Trinity”, or ‘Godhead’. These phrases describe the nature of God, as being made up of three persons but one God. A Trio of One.

- **God = Father, Son, Holy Spirit**

The Bible teaches that there is one God, who has revealed Himself in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Three but One. Extremely difficult to comprehend I know, but not unbelievable. This study will attempt to make this ‘Three equals One’ nature of God a little more understandable.

Incomprehensible, but believable

There is so much about God that we (mere humans) cannot even begin to comprehend. If we could understand everything about God, He wouldn’t be much more intelligent than we are. Think about it... the simple fact that we cannot fathom God is stunning proof that He is God! We will never be able to fully comprehend God and His ways until we get to Heaven and He reveals everything to us, but we can always trust.

*¹²Now we see things imperfectly as in a poor mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God knows me now. **1 Corinthians 13:12 (NLT)***

God created man in His own image (Genesis 1:26), and we only have to look at ourselves to get a glimpse of the triune character of God.

‘Three-in-one’ examples in nature

*²⁰From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God. **Romans 1:20 (NLT)***

We can grasp much about the nature and character of God by observing His creation. For example, God has made us with three very different parts. We have three very different aspects of ourselves and yet we are one being:

- **Man = spirit, soul, body**

There is also the very well known egg illustration. Three distinct parts but all one object:

- **Egg = shell, white, yoke**

Many Christians try to explain the Trinity by likening God to water. Water having three different forms but still the same thing:

- **Water = liquid, solid, gas**

This is not a Biblical explanation of the Trinity however, because there are three distinct persons that are God, and they cannot change into one another (unlike water).

What the Bible teaches

Surprisingly, the Bible doesn’t contain the word ‘Trinity’, but it is very plain to see what the Bible writers and the Bible characters believed and taught about the triune (three-in-one) nature of God, as we shall soon see.

Only one God

Believers of the Trinity are often accused of polytheism (worshipping more than one God), but this is not true. Christians believe in, and worship only one God.

⁴*Hear O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is one.* **Deuteronomy 6:4 (NIV)**

⁶*This is what the LORD, Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty, says: I am the First and the Last; there is no other God.* **Isaiah 44:6 (NLT)**

Three persons but one God

The Bible teaches that God is three persons.

²⁶*Then God said, "Let us make people in our image, to be like ourselves."* **Genesis 1:26 (NLT)**

Some people say that God is talking to His angels in the above verse, but angels are created beings, and could not and did not help God to create.

⁸*Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to my people? Who will go for us?"* **Isaiah 6:8 (NLT)**

¹⁹*Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.* **Matthew 28:19 (NLT)**

God is... the Father

The Bible teaches that God is the Father.

¹*This letter is from Paul, an apostle. I was not appointed by any group or by human authority. My call is from Jesus Christ himself and from God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead.* **Galatians 1:1 (NLT)**

¹⁰*so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,*
¹¹*and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* **Philippians 2:10-11 (NLT)**

God is... the Son

The Bible teaches that God is the Son.

⁸*But to his Son he says, "Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever."* **Hebrews 1:8a (NLT)**

³⁰*"The Father and I are one."* **John 10:30 (NLT)**

²*But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.* ³*The Son is the exact radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being...* **Hebrews 1:2-3a (NIV)**

God is... the Holy Spirit

The Bible teaches that God is the Holy Spirit.

³*Then Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart? You lied to the Holy Spirit..."* ⁴*You weren't lying to us but to God."* **Acts 5:3a, 4b (NLT)**

Some cults do not teach that the Holy Spirit is a person of the Trinity. They also teach that the Holy Spirit is not a person at all, just a force. The Bible says:

¹³*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not be presenting his own ideas; he will be telling you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.* ¹⁴*He will bring me glory by revealing to you whatever he receives from me.* **John 16:13-14 (NLT)**

If the Holy Spirit was just a force, He would be called an 'it', and not a 'He'. Jesus was making a point here. A force does not have personality or attributes. Jesus said the Holy Spirit guides, foretells the future, glorifies Jesus Christ and reveals things to the Christian. No force can do that – only a living, eternal person can.

The 'Jesus is not God' deception

Warning! Do not be deceived into doubting that Jesus is God! The Bible is very clear about people and organisations that preach 'another' gospel...

⁸*Let God's curse fall on anyone, including myself, who preaches any other message than the one we told you about. Even if an angel comes from heaven and preaches any other message, let him be forever cursed.* ⁹*I will say it again: If anyone preaches any other gospel than the one you welcomed, let God's curse fall upon that person.* **Galatians 1:8-9 (NLT)**

There are so called 'Christians' that teach that Jesus Christ is not God; Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses are just two examples. Let me be very clear... you cannot be a genuine Christian, and believe that Jesus Christ is not God!

It would be extremely unwise to debate with such people, unless you are very strong in your faith and Bible knowledge, because they are highly trained to confuse young Christians into doubting that Jesus is God.

⁷*Many deceivers have gone out into the world. They do not believe that Jesus Christ came to earth in a real body. Such a person is a deceiver and an antichrist.* ⁸*Watch out, so that you do not lose the prize for which we have been working so hard. Be diligent so that you will receive your full reward.* ⁹*For if you wander beyond the teaching of Christ, you will not have fellowship with God. But if you continue in the teaching of Christ, you will have fellowship with both the Father and the Son.*

¹⁰*If someone comes to your meeting and does not teach the truth about Christ, don't invite him into your house or encourage him in any way.* ¹¹*Anyone who encourages him becomes a partner in his evil work.* **2 John 1:7-11 (NLT)**

Lie #1: Jesus is a god

¹*In the beginning the Word already existed. He was with God, and he was God.* ²*He was in the beginning with God.* ³*He created everything there is. Nothing exists that he didn't make.* **John 1:1-3 (NLT)**

Note: The verses go on to explain that 'The Word' is Jesus Christ.

The Jehovah's Witness translation of the Bible (The New World Translation) purposefully mistranslates this verse to support their teaching that Jesus Christ is not God. Their version reads:

*In the beginning was the Word, and the word was with God, and the Word **was a god.*** **John 1:1 (New World Translation)**

Any novice Bible translator would easily be able to prove that the Jehovah's Witness Bible's rendering of John 1:1 is grossly inaccurate!

Lie #2: Jesus was created

¹⁵*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created...* **Colossians 1:15 (NIV)**

Some cults say that this verse proved that Jesus is not God. The word 'firstborn' does not mean that Jesus was born first. The writer of Colossians, Paul, was writing to Jews here and the Jews had a name for Jehovah (God):

- **Jehovah = Becoro Shel Olam**

Becoro Shel Olam translated means: 'Firstborn of all the world or of all creation', and carries the meaning that God is supreme over all creation.¹ We know that God wasn't born, and any Jew reading this would immediately understand that Paul was saying that Jesus was God.

Words don't always mean what you think they mean. With Bible study it is important to understand what the writer meant and to what culture he was writing to when he used certain words. For example, to surfers, 'sick waves' means excellent waves, to non-surfers sick waves mean unwell waves (which doesn't really make sense). The meaning of one word can differ vastly when heard from different cultures or sub-cultures. It's the same with the Bible. I highly recommend buying a Study Bible. Study Bibles give great insight into things such as the word meanings and hard-to-understand verses etc.

The New Living version of the Bible translates the verse in the correct understanding for our time and culture to avoid confusion...

¹⁵*Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before God made anything at all and is supreme over all creation. Colossians 1:15 (NLT)*

All man, all God and sinless

One major proof that Jesus is God is the fact that He reconciled man back to God by being the atoning sacrifice on the cross. To achieve what Jesus did on the cross He had to be:

- **All man, all God and sinless**

Only someone who was all human could die in our place... Jesus was. Only someone who has no beginning or no end could break the power of sin and death... Jesus was. Only someone who was sinless could be the atoning sacrifice for sin... Jesus was. Only someone who was all man and all God could reconcile man back to God... Jesus was. Which leaves us with only one conclusion... Jesus is God.

Evidence that demands a verdict

The following verses prove beyond any shadow of a doubt that Jesus Christ is God.² These verses also work with the erroneous Jehovah's Witness' New World Bible translation.

- **Who is the one true God?**

⁵*I am the LORD; there is no other God. I have prepared you, even though you do not know me, so all the world from east to west will know there is no other God. I am the LORD, and there is no other. Isaiah 45:5-6 (NLT)*

²⁷*Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!"*

²⁸*"My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed. John 20:27-28 (NLT)*

- **Who is the Saviour?**

¹¹*I am the LORD, and there is no other Savior. Isaiah 43:11 (NLT)*

¹³*while we look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. Titus 2:13 (NLT)*

- **Who is the First and the Last?**

⁶*This is what the LORD, Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty, says: I am the First and the Last; there is no other God. Isaiah 44:6 (NLT)*

¹⁷*When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸I am the living one who died. Look, I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave. Revelation 1:17-18 (NLT)*

- **Who is the Lord of Lords?**

¹⁷*"The LORD your God is the God of gods and Lord of lords. He is the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and takes no bribes. Deuteronomy 10:17 (NLT)*

¹⁴*"Together they will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them because he is Lord over all lords and King over all kings, and his people are the called and chosen and faithful ones." Revelation 17:14 (NLT)*

- **Who sent the Holy Spirit?**

²⁶*But when the Father sends the Counselor as my representative—and by the Counselor I mean the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I myself have told you. John 14:26 (NLT)*

⁷*But it is actually best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Counselor won't come. If I do go away, he will come because I will send him to you. John 16:7 (NLT)*

- **Who is the light of the world?**

¹*The LORD is my light and my salvation— so why should I be afraid? Psalm 27:1 (NLT)*

¹²*Jesus said to the people, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't be stumbling through the darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." John 8:12 (NLT)*

- **Who will judge us?**

⁶*Then let the heavens proclaim his justice, for God himself will be the judge. Psalm 50:6 (NLT)*

³⁹*Then Jesus told him, "I have come to judge the world. I have come to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind." John 9:39 (NLT)*

- **Who is the shepherd?**

¹*The LORD is my shepherd; I have everything I need. Psalm 23:1 (NLT)*

¹¹*"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. John 10:11 (NLT)*

Conclusion

I trust this study has shed some light on the subject of the triune nature of God, and also has given concrete proof that Jesus Christ is God. Remember that although it is sometimes difficult to understand God and His ways, we can always trust Him!

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References:

¹ Adam Clarke's Commentary on Colossians 1:15-16. An online version is available: <http://www.godrules.net/library/clarke/clarke.htm>.

² Adapted from Francis Afuso and David Hobbs, tract "The Jehovah's Witness Bible Proves That Jesus Christ Is God".