

THE TRINITY Lesson 1 Introduction To The Trinitarian Doctrine

The term “Trinity” is not found in the Scriptures, although the concept it expresses is overtly Scriptural. The doctrine of the Trinity was implicitly held by the Apostles and the New Testament writers but not formulated explicitly. As one commentary states, “They held it, as it were in solution: only time, reflection, and the shock of controversy and opposition, caused it to crystalize into definite and dogmatic form.” Consider some other quotes concerning the Trinity from theology:

- “The doctrine of the Trinity is not so much heard, as overheard, in the statements of the Scripture.”
- “What meets us in the New Testament is the *disjecta membra* (scattered fragments) of the Trinity.” –George P. Fisher
- “The doctrine of the Trinity is the Christian attempt to make intelligible the personality of God without dependence on the world.” –G.B. Foster
- “Though the doctrine of the Trinity is not discoverable by human reason, it is susceptible of a rational defense, when revealed.”

Tertullian (2nd Century, Father of Latin Theology) is credited with coining the term “Trinity,” though his understanding was still in development. The full doctrine, as we understand it, was not fully formulated until the Council of Nicaea, in 325 A.D., though here it is deemed by some to be only “semi-Trinitarian” by today’s understanding. The critical aspect to understanding the nature of the Trinity is to know that there are three eternal distinctions in the substance of God.

STRONG’S SIX TRINITARIAN STATEMENTS

The doctrine of the Trinity can be summarized by the six following statements (as adopted from Angus Hopkins Strong, 1907):

1. In Scripture there are three who are recognized as God.
2. These three are so described in Scripture that we are compelled to conceive of them as distinct persons.
3. This tri-personality of the divine nature is not merely economic (distribution of power) and temporal but is immanent (remaining with) and eternal.
4. This tri-personality is not tritheism (three separate gods); for while there are three persons, there is but one essence.
5. The three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are equal.
6. Inscrutable (mysterious) yet not self-contradictory, this doctrine furnishes the key to all other doctrines.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR THE TRINITY

Once the Trinitarian doctrine is understood, it is impossible to *not* see it in the Scriptures. From the very first verse, the Bible alludes to the Trinitarian nature of God.

- **In the beginning God (*elohiym*) created the heaven and the earth.**
Genesis 1:1

The very first reference to God and the very first name ascribed to God is *elohiym*—*The Mighty Ones*. It is a plural form of *God*. *Elohiym* is used 32 times in the 31 verses of Genesis chapter 1.

- **Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, and in our likeness”**
Genesis 1:26 NKJV

God uses plural pronouns to describe Himself.

- **For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: . . . and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor [the Holy Spirit’s job, John’s *paraklete*], The mighty God, The everlasting Father [God the Father], The Prince of Peace [Jesus, the Son of God].**
Isaiah 9:6

This famous Messianic prophecy clearly reveals the Trinity over 700 years before Christ was born.

- **The Spirit of the Lord (*Adonai*) GOD (*Jehovah*) is upon me; because the LORD (*Jehovah*) hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; . . . ²To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD (*Jehovah*), and the day of vengeance of our God (*Elohiym*);**
Isaiah 61:1a, 2

The Lord Jesus read this passage in every synagogue before He preached. This famous passage from Isaiah reveals the Trinity: The Spirit is upon me (Jesus), to proclaim the year of the Lord and the day of God (the Father). The entire Trinity is involved in preaching the Gospel.

In The Gospels

- **And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending upon him like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**
Matthew 3:16-17

The Trinity was present at the Lord’s baptism. Jesus was in the water. The Holy Spirit was coming upon Him. Then God the Father spoke from heaven.

- **And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. John 14:16**

The Promise of the Holy Spirit involved the mobilization of the entire Godhead. Jesus prayed to the Father so that the Father would give the Comforter to the believers.

- **But when the Comforter is come, whom I [Jesus] will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: John 15:26**

This verse amazingly affirms the Trinity twice, even mentioning the Holy Spirit three times.

- **Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. ¹⁴He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. ¹⁵All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. John 16:13-15**

This famous paracletic passage exalts the Trinity. These three verses reference the Holy Spirit 11 times, Jesus five times, and God the Father once.

In Acts And The Epistles

- **How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. Acts 10:38**

Jesus of Nazareth was the Trinity in full operation in the earth—the Son anointed with the Spirit by the Father.

- **And he that searcheth the hearts [Jesus, see Revelation 2:23] knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God [the Father]. Romans 8:27**

Here, the entire Trinity is at work on behalf of the saints through the act of intercession.

- **But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches. 1 Corinthians 7:17**

God distributes, but the Son calls. Paul ordained this command under inspiration of the Holy Spirit.



- **Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;
Romans 15:30**
- **Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. ⁶And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.
1 Corinthians 12:4-6**

The Trinity is evident in the gracing, administrating, and operating of the New Testament Church. Even in this famous passage about the Gifts of the Spirit, the Trinity is apparent.

- **But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: **2 Thessalonians 2:13****

The subtle nuances of this verse help us to discern the roles of the Godhead in the affairs of mankind. Prayers are always directed to the Father in the name of Jesus (see **John 14:13-14, 15:16, 16:23-26**). The Father is the planner and designer. Our sanctification is a work of the Holy Spirit. Yet, we are beloved of the Lord Jesus.

- **Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace, be multiplied.
1 Peter 1:2**

Each member of the Godhead has a role to play in our lives. God the Father elects us. The Holy Spirit guides our sanctification. Christ's blood sprinkles us. All so we are successful in obeying Jesus our Lord.

As is evident, there is so much to the doctrine of the Trinity that we have yet to even consider or study. May God bless our understanding on this subject!

THE TRINITY Lesson 2 God The Father

The Trinity has been called the greatest of all divine mysteries and “the center gem of divine revelation.” Remember, all persons of the Trinity are coequal and coeternal. As stated in *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology*, “Because it is a mystery, we do not expect to reduce it to logical formulas, any more than we would attempt to transfer the Pacific Ocean into a teacup” (88).

God did not overtly reveal His Trinitarian nature in the Old Testament, probably due to the pervasive threat of polytheism surrounding his people. But as time advanced, God continued to reveal to man more and more of His nature, allowing the nature of the Trinity to appear more clearly. It is with the Incarnation of Christ and the subsequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost that the entirety of the Trinity begins to appear overtly.

- **Hear, O Israel: The LORD (*Jehovah*) our God (*Elohiym*) is one LORD (*Jehovah*).
Deuteronomy 6:4**

This verse reveals unity in plurality. As a reminder, *Elohiym* is plural, meaning “the mighty ones.” The one true God, our God, are Mighty Ones. The name *Adonai*, is also plural, the singular being *Adon*, meaning “master or lord.” *Adonai* appears over 300 times in the Psalms and books of Prophecy.

THE UNSEEN FATHER

Recognizing this one prime characteristic will be helpful in understanding the Trinity: no man has ever seen the Father (see **Deuteronomy 4:12; Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 1:18, 5:27, 6:46; 1 Timothy 6:16; 1 John 4:12, 20**).

Both the Son and the Holy Spirit have been seen: Jesus in His earthly ministry and in visions and visitations after His ascension, and the Holy Spirit in the burning bush, the cloud by day, the fire by night, in the cloud that filled the Temple, at the River Jordan as a dove, as tongues of fire at Pentecost, etc.

If the Father has never been seen, this also automatically implies that every theophany in the Old Testament was the Lord Jesus pre-incarnate (see *Lesson 3*).

OLD TESTAMENT VERSES DISTINGUISHING THE FATHER

In terms of the Trinity, it is difficult to distinguish which person of the Godhead is at work in the Old Testament, and this is not a problem, merely an observation. Numerous Old Testament stories readily distinguish between God acting versus His Spirit moving, but finding the distinction between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is not as easy before the Gospels as it is during and after them.

However, there are several Old Testament passages that distinguish between the Father and the Son. These verses are generally prophetic in nature, foretelling the Messianic assignment. They also allude to something called “Economic Subordinationism,” that is, the Son’s submission to the Father for the purpose of redemption, which will be discussed further in *Lesson 5*.

- **I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten (Greek *monogenes*—single of its kind) thee.**
Psalm 2:7

Viewing this psalm from this side of Calvary reveals that this is the Father speaking to the Son. This is quoted in **Acts 13:33**.

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

Who is speaking? The Father. Who is being spoken to? The Son. Whose throne is it? The Father’s. Whose enemies must be crushed? The Son’s.

- **For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.**
Isaiah 9:6

Isaiah 9 clearly established the plurality of the Trinity, but more particularly, it reveals the name and nature of God as “the Father,” yet one Son shall be known as all five of these descriptors: Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

- **Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.**
Isaiah 53:10

Isaiah 53:1-9 refers to Jesus Christ 30 times through the pronouns of *he*, *him*, and *his*. Verse 10 continues to talk about *him*—Jesus, yet it is the LORD that bruised *him* and put *him* to grief. Clearly here the LORD is referring to the Father.

THE FATHER REVEALED THROUGH REDEMPTION

The Father is primarily revealed to us through His relationship to the Son in context of the Incarnation and our redemption. Logically, the role and personage of the Father comes into greater clarity in light of the Son’s incarnation. The book of **John** speaks of “the Father” over 120 times (cf. Matthew 44x, Mark 5x, and Luke 20x).

The Father Is Recognized As God

- **John 6:27** is the first use of the term “God the Father.” It occurs a total of 13 times in the New Testament.
- **But to us there is but one God, the Father . . . (1 Corinthians 8:6).**
- We are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (**1 Peter 1:2**).

The Father’s Role In The Atonement—He Is The Sender

- The Father sent Jesus (**John 3:16, 6:57, 8:16, 12:49, 14:24**).
- The Father sent the Holy Ghost (**Luke 11:13, 24:49; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; Acts 1:4; 2:17, 33**).

OTHER ATTRIBUTES OF THE FATHER

- The Father is worshipped (**John 4:21-23**).
- The Father has committed all judgment to the Son (**John 5:22**).
- He is called the Father of Lights (**James 1:17**).
- He is called the Father of spirits (**Hebrews 12:9**).

ALL THINGS ARE OF THE FATHER

- Of Him, through Him, and to Him are all things (**Romans 11:36**).
- All things exist *for* the Father. This verse contrasts “for the Father” with the Lord Jesus Christ, “*by* whom are all things” (**1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:16-17**).
- We are called according to the Father’s purpose (**Romans 8:28**).

THE FATHER KNOWS ALL THINGS

- Only the Father knows the day of Christ’s return (**Matthew 24:36**).
- Even Jesus doesn’t know the day or hour of His own return (**Mark 13:32**).
- We’ve been chosen by the foreknowledge of the Father (**1 Peter 1:2**).

THE FATHER WILL ALL THINGS

- Jesus was about His Father’s business (**Luke 2:49**).
- God reveals truths unto babes as it seems good to Him (**Luke 10:21**).
- Jesus sought the will of His Father (**John 5:30**).
- The Father willed that Jesus should lose no one (**John 6:39**).
- The Father has planned the times and the seasons in His own power (**Acts 1:7**).
- Jesus was delivered up by the determined plan and foreknowledge of the Father (**Acts 2:23**).
- We have been predestinated by the will of the Father to be conformed to the image of His Son (**Romans 8:29**).
- Jesus came to obey the will of His Father (**Hebrews 10:7**).

THE FATHER FORGIVES

- We must practice forgiveness for the Father to forgive us (**Mark 11:25-26**).
- Jesus prayed, “**Father forgive them; for they know not what they do**” (**Luke 23:34**).

- God forgives for Christ sake (**Ephesians 4:32**).

MORE TRINITY SCRIPTURES

- **And the LORD God (*Elohiym*) said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil:** **Genesis 3:22**
- **Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.** **Genesis 11:7**
- **Also I hear the voice of the Lord (*Adonai*), saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.** **Isaiah 6:8**
- **Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.** **Acts 20:28**
- **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:** **Matthew 28:19**
- **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.** **2 Corinthians 13:14**
- **There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; ⁵One Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.** **Ephesians 4:4-6**
- **And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit:¹⁹Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;** **Ephesians 5:18-20**
- **But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, ²¹Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.** **Jude 20-21**

May God continue to grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to know Him and His divine nature!!

THE TRINITY

Lesson 3

God The Son

To review, the Trinity has been called the greatest of all divine mysteries and “the center gem of divine revelation.” Beginning in **Genesis 1:1**, God has revealed Himself to be a unity in plurality—or God, three in one. Three persons, yet one in substance; coeternal and coequal. The complexity of this spiritual fact is apparent, yet God further revealed this mystery through the Incarnation—Jesus the Christ, the Word made flesh. The Incarnation has been dubbed “eternity stepping into time.” The manifestation and revelation of Jesus Christ helps us to further understand our God and the Trinitarian nature by allowing us to handle the Word of life.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Lord Jesus was active in the Old Testament, appearing to His servants in theophanies—divine appearances. Since no man has seen the Father (**Luke 10:22; John 1:18, 5:27; 6:46; 1 Timothy 6:16; 1 John 4:12-20**), we must understand these divine appearances of God to be the Lord Jesus before the Incarnation. Often, even the “angel of the Lord” appearing in the Old Testament was actually the Lord Jesus, but only when this “messenger” permitted Himself to be worshiped. Major Old Testament theophanies include:

- Abraham upon entering the Promised Land (**Gen. 12:7-9**)
- Hagar as she was sent away from Sarai (here, the “Angel of the Lord”) (**Gen. 16:7-14**)
- Abraham at 99 years old (**Genesis 17:1**)
- Before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (**Genesis 18:1**)
- With Abraham on Mt. Moriah (**Genesis 22:11-18**)
- Jacob as he wrestled with the Angel (**Genesis 32:24-30**)
- Moses at the Burning Bush (**Exodus 3:1-6**)
- With Moses on Mt. Sinai (**Exodus 19:20**)
- With Moses in the cleft of the rock (**Exodus 33:19-23**)
- At Moses’ transfer of power (**Deuteronomy 31:35**)
- Joshua upon entering Canaan (here, the “Captain of the Host of the LORD”) (**Joshua 5:13-15**)
- Gideon as he threshed wheat (here, the “Angel of the Lord”) (**Judges 6:19-24**)

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE GOD

Quite amazing, Jesus claimed to be God while simultaneously referring to His Father as God.

- **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18).**
- **Before Abraham was, I am (John 8:58).**
- **I and my Father are one (John 10:30).**
- **He that hath seen me hath seen the Father (John 14:9).**

- **Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, . . . but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God (John 5:18).**
 - Jesus refers to His father 120 times in John's Gospel alone.
- Faith's divine double imperative:
 - **You believe in God, believe also in me (John 14:1).**

THE NEW TESTAMENT EQUATES JESUS TO JEHOVAH

Jehovah is the most commonly used name of God in the Old Testament. It is translated as *LORD* in the King James translation, meaning "the existing One" or "the self-existent One." It is first seen in **Genesis 2:4** and is used 6,519 times in the Old Testament. It is often coupled together with *Elohiym* (God) and rendered *the LORD God*. This term literally translates as "the self-existent Mighty Ones." (Remember that *Elohiym* is plural.) The following New Testament verses apply Old Testament passages containing *Jehovah* to Jesus of Nazareth:

- **Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.**
Matthew 3:3 (cf. Isa. 40:3)
- **Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?**
John 12:37-41
(cf. Isaiah 53:1, 6:1)
- **Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.**
Eph. 4:6-8 (cf. Ps. 68:18)
- **But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.**
1 Peter 3:15 (cf. Isa. 8:13)

THE NEW TESTAMENT RECOGNIZES JESUS AS GOD

Both the Gospels and the Epistles ascribed deity to Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

- **In the beginning was the Word, . . . and the Word was God.**
John 1:1
- **And Thomas answered and said unto him, "My Lord and my God."**
John 20:28
- **Who being in the form of God, though it not robbery to be equal with God.**
Philippians 2:6
- **For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.**
Colossians 2:9

- **And the Lord shall . . . preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.**
2 Timothy 4:18
- **Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.**
Titus 2:13
- **Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.**
Hebrews 13:8
- **I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.**
Isaiah 44:6
 - Quoted by Jesus Christ in the **Revelation 1:8**—“**I am the alpha and the omega.**”

JESUS POSSESSES THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The New Testament ascribes the attributes of God to Jesus, making Him God.

- He is life: **John 1:4, 14:6**
- He is self-existent: **John 5:26; Hebrews 13:8**
- He is immutable: **Hebrews 13:8**
- He is truth: **John 14:6; Revelation 3:7**
- He is love: **1 John 3:16**
- He is holiness: **Luke 1:35; John 6:69; Hebrews 7:26**
- He is eternal: **John 1:1, 8:58, 17:5; Ephesians 1:4; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:11; Revelation 21:6**
- He is omnipresent: **Matthew 28:20; Ephesians 1:23**
- He is omniscient: **Matthew 9:4; John 2:24-25, 16:30; Acts 1:24; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Colossians 2:3**
- He is omnipotent: **Matthew 27:18; Revelation 1:8**
- He is the Creator: **John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 6:8; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:10, 3:3-4; Revelation 3:14**
- He is worshipped: **Philippians 2:9-10; Hebrews 1:6**
- He is the image of the Invisible God: **John 14:9; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3**
- He is the fullness of the Godhead: **Colossians 1:19, 2:9**

THE ROLE OF JESUS

Perhaps a potentially controversial notion concerning the Trinity is the distribution of powers and responsibilities in God's dealings with mankind. Consider:

- It is the Son that was born of a virgin, became a servant, became obedient unto the Father's will, and died on the cross (**Philippians 2:5-8**).
 - But it was the Father that has highly exalted Him and given Him the name above every name (**Philippians 2:9**).



- It is Jesus that suffered for sins (**1 Peter 3:18, 4:1**).
 - But it pleased the Father to bruise Him and put Him to grief (**Isaiah 53:10**).
- It is Jesus (not the Father or the Spirit) that has redeemed us back to God, by the power of the Holy Spirit (**Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:14**).
- Jesus is the Healer (**Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:4**).
 - But God anointed Jesus to heal . . .
 - . . . with the Holy Ghost and power (**Acts 10:38**).
- Jesus gave us five ministry gifts (**Ephesians 4:11-12**).
 - God gave seven grace gifts (**Romans 12:3-8**).
 - The Holy Spirit gave nine spiritual gifts (**1 Corinthians 12:7-11**).
- Jesus baptizes us into the Holy Spirit (**John 3:11**).
 - The Holy Spirit baptizes us into the Body of Christ (**1 Corinthians 12:13**).
 - But it is God the Father who sent the Holy Spirit (**Acts 1:4**).
- We are members of the Body of Christ (**Ephesians 5:30**).
 - But it is God the Father who hath set us in that Body where it pleased Him (**1 Corinthians 12:18**).
- Jesus sends/commissions us to go (**Matthew 28:19-20**) even as . . .
 - He was sent by His Father (**John 20:21**).
- Jesus will return in Judgment to restore the Kingdom (**Acts 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**) . . .
 - . . . when the Father sends Him (**Mark 13:32**).

BONUS TRINITY SCRIPTURE

- **How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**
Hebrews 9:14

May God help us to know Him in all His fullness!!

THE TRINITY Lesson 4 God The Holy Spirit

“The mind of man cannot fully understand the mystery of the Trinity. He who has tried to understand the mystery fully will lose his mind; but he who would deny the Trinity will lose his soul.”

Harold Lindsell and Charles J. Woodbridge, *A Handbook of Christian Truth* (Westwood, NJ: F. H. Revell), 1953, pp. 51-52.

As we have said, from the very first verse in the Bible, God revealed Himself to be a Trinity. The use of the plural *Elohiym* in **Genesis 1:1** sets the tone for the rest of the Bible. Interestingly enough, the Holy Spirit is the first person of the Trinity to be distinguished.

- **In the beginning God (*Elohiym*) created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God (*Elohiym*) moved (*brooded*) upon the face of the waters.**
Genesis 1:1-2

It is actually the Holy Spirit that is most tangibly manifested throughout the Old Testament, even more than the theophanies of Christ. Consider some of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament:

- The Burning Bush (**Exodus 3:1-6**).
- The Fire by Night (**Exodus 13:21-22, 40:38; Numbers 9:16**). Israel saw this every night for 40 years.
- The Cloud by Day (**Exodus 13:21-22, 40:38; Numbers 9:16**). Israel saw this every day for 40 years.
- On Mt. Sinai (**Exodus 19:16-20; Hebrews 12:18-19**).
- The Glory of the Lord
 - filling the Tabernacle (**Exodus 40:34-38; Leviticus 9:23-24; Numbers 14:10, 16:42**)
 - filling the Temple (**1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14**)

AT WORK IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

We can see intimations of the Holy Spirit at work in the Old Testament accomplishing many of the same things the New Testament Church is familiar with today.

- **And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.**
Exodus 35:31

The Holy Spirit has always been the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and all knowledge (see **Isaiah 11:2-3; Ephesians 1:17; James 1:5**).

- **And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those things, and his anger was kindled greatly. 1 Samuel 11:6**

Here, the Spirit of God communicated righteous indignation onto King Saul in order to accomplish righteous judgment against the Ammonites, God's enemies.

- **... and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. 1 Samuel 19:20b**

The Spirit of God has always been the Spirit of prophecy (see also **2 Samuel 23:1-3**). When the Spirit of prophecy came upon King Saul, he began to prophesy. Those who saw the transformation speculated that Saul had become a prophet.

- **Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Psalm 51:11**

After David's adulterous affair, David could tell he had grieved the Spirit of God. He feared that God's Spirit had permanently departed him.

- **For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Peter 1:21**

The entirety of Scripture was authored when the Spirit of God moved upon the holy men of old.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS RECOGNIZED AS GOD

The Bible speaks of the Holy Spirit as God. The attributes of God are ascribed to Him, He does the works of God, He receives the honor of God, and He is associated with God on an equal footing.

- If you lie to the Holy Spirit, you have lied to God (**Acts 5:3-4**).
- Our bodies are the **"temple of God,"** the temple of the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 3:16**).
- The attributes of God belong to the Holy Spirit:
 - He is the Spirit of Life (**Romans 8:2**)
 - He is the Spirit of Truth (**John 16:13**).
 - His is the **"love of the Spirit,"** because God is love (**Romans 15:30**).
 - He is the **"Holy" Spirit,** personifying the holiness of God (**Ephesians 4:30**).
 - He is the **"eternal Spirit,"** personifying the eternal nature of God (**Hebrews 9:14**).
 - Omnipresence:
 - **Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Psalm 139:7**

- Omniscience:
 - **The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding . . .**
Isaiah 11:2-3
 - **He shall teach you all things.** John 14:26
 - **Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.**
1 Corinthians 2:11b
- Omnipotence:
 - **And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:**
Romans 1:4
- The Works of God are ascribed to Him:
 - Involved in Creation (**Genesis 1:2; Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30**).
 - Casting out demons (**Matthew 12:28**).
 - Conviction of sin (**John 16:8**).
 - Regeneration/New Birth (**John 3:8; Titus 3:5**).
- The Holy Spirit's Association with God:
 - Baptism Formula: **"baptizing them in the in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"** (Matt. 28:19).
 - Apostolic Benedictions:
 - **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.**
2 Corinthians 13:14
 - **Elect according to . . . God the Father, through the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience . . . of the blood of Jesus Christ:**
1 Peter 2:11

HE IS A PERSON

We must not think of the Holy Spirit as a wind, a vapor, a wisp, a puff of smoke, a dove, or simply a force. He is God! He is the third person of the Godhead.

- Personal pronouns are used in relation to Him (**John 14:16-17, 15:26, 16:13-14; Ephesians 1:13-14 NASB**).
- He can be mistreated like a person:
 - He can be lied to (**Acts 5:3**).
 - He can be resisted (**Acts 7:51**).
 - He can be tempted/tested (**Acts 5:9**).
- He demonstrates emotions:
 - Love (**Romans 15:30**)
 - Vexation (**Genesis 6:3; Isaiah 63:10**)
 - Grief (**Ephesians 4:30**)
 - Insult (**Hebrews 10:29**)
 - Quench/Frustration (**1 Thessalonians 5:19**)

- He possesses a will:
 - He divides the gifts as He wills (**1 Corinthians 12:11**).
 - He has intentions (**Romans 8:27**).
- He demonstrates actions:
 - He teaches (**John 14:26**).
 - He speaks (**Acts 13:2, 21:11; Revelation 2:7**).
 - He testifies (**John 15:26**).

THE NEW TESTAMENT ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The departure of Jesus Christ from the earth at the Ascension was necessary for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. Jesus is no longer in the earth (**Luke 24:51; John 7:33-34, 13:3, 33; 14:12, 18-19; 16:5-7; Acts 1:2, 9-11; 2:33; 9:55-56**). Christ's departure was an exchange of His presence for His omnipresence; an exchange of companionship for indwelling; an exchange of limited for unlimited power. (Jesus was in one place in His earthly ministry, now His Body is worldwide.) Just as Jesus came to accomplish a specific assignment—redemption, the Holy Spirit has come to accomplish another specific set of assignments necessary for God's glory and man's benefit.

The Holy Spirit was sent from Heaven after the ascension of Jesus Christ. These are some of the roles of the Holy Spirit in the NT:

- **Convincer/Reprover**—The Holy Spirit was sent to convict the world of their sinfulness and their need for a savior (**John 16:8-11**).
- **Regenerator**—The Holy Spirit is the agent of salvation. He is how we can be “in Christ” (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). We must be born-again or born of the Spirit (**John 3:8**). It is the Holy Spirit that baptizes us into the Body of Christ (**1 Corinthians 12:13**).
- **Comforter**—The Holy Spirit was sent as our divine *paraklete*—helper, comforter, aid, advocate, etc.; “the one called together with against.”
- **Divine Guide**—The Holy Spirit was sent to guide the believers in the will of God (**John 16:13**).
- **Revealer**—The Holy Spirit was sent to reveal the things of the Lord Jesus to the Church (**John 16:13-14**).
- **Intercessor**—As the Lord Jesus searches our hearts and judges His findings according to the will of the Father, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us to keep us in the Way (**Romans 8:26-27**).
- **Fruit Bearer**—The Holy Spirit was sent to help the Church produce the nine fruit of the Spirit (aka the attitudes of Christ) and thereby glorify the Father (**Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:8**).
- **Power Exhibitionist**—The Holy Spirit was sent to manifest or exhibit the power of God through nine gifts of the Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:7-11**).
- **Sanctifier**—The Holy Spirit was sent to sanctify the individual believers. His work in our life should make us “holy” even as He is holy (**2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4**).



- **Tongues Equipper**—The Holy Spirit was sent for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. He allows the believer to pray in other tongues (**Acts 1:8, 2:1-4, 38; 10:44-46; 19:1-7**).

In summary, the Holy Spirit dwells in and empowers the Church, the Body of Christ.

BONUS TRINITY SCRIPTURES

- **Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?**
Proverbs 30:4
- **Come ye near unto me, hear ye this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.**
Isaiah 48:16
- **But I [God] will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah, their God (*Elohiym*) . . .**
Hosea 1:7

May we continue to love and seek after this perfect and holy triune God!!

THE TRINITY Lesson 5 Anti-Trinitarian Heresies

I have done thorough research into the origins and names of the diverse anti-Trinitarian heresies that have arisen since the Church's inception. These heresies resulted from theologians and teachers either overemphasizing or underemphasizing the various persons of the Godhead. Each doctrinal heresy seems accurate when only one scripture is used to back its stance. However, any and all solid doctrine must be built by evaluating all scriptural evidence.

MONARCHIANISM

Monarchianism was developed in the 2nd Century A.D. It was developed in attempt to maintain monotheism and combat tritheism. Monarchianism views God as one person: the Father. This view holds that God was in Jesus just like God is in all of us, but that God was in Jesus in an especially powerful way. Thus, Jesus was God, but only because there was a lot of God in Him, just as a rock could be God if enough of God were in that rock. The Holy Spirit is considered a force of God the Father. Jehovah's Witnesses and Unitarians hold this doctrine.

MODALISM—AKA Modalistic Monarchianism Or Sabellianism

This is the belief that God Almighty is one God and the three persons of the Bible—Father, Son, and Spirit—are just different “modes” by which God manifested or operated. Typically, it is held that God manifested as the Father in the Old Testament, as the Son in the Gospels, and now as the Holy Spirit in the New Testament Epistles and Church Age. This view is also known as *Sabellianism*, after Sabellius, a 3rd Century theologian. He was later labeled as a heretic for his anti-Trinitarian teachings. This doctrine rejects the notion that God is three unique persons, yet one God. Oneness Pentecostals and United Apostolic Churches are modalist. They reject classic Trinitarianism because they view it as polytheism. The common analogy used to demonstrate *Modalism* is that of God being like water in its three forms: solid, liquid, gas.

PATRIPASSIANISM

Patrispassianism literally means *the father suffered*. This doctrine is a version of *Modalistic Monarchianism* and was developed in the 3rd Century. This view teaches that God became His own incarnate Son, suffered on the cross, died, and was resurrected. This teaching denies the Trinity.

PARTIALISM

This view holds that God is divided into three parts: Father, Son, and Spirit, and is not wholly one until the three parts, or thirds, come together. St. Patrick (of Irish fame) often used the three-leaf clover to teach the Trinity. However, upon closer inspection, his green analogy was really *Partialism*; each leaf of the clover being a member of the Godhead but all

three leaves necessary to combine and make a whole God. This is heresy because it divides God into thirds and fails to recognize the unity of the Trinity.

ARIANISM

Named for Arius, a 3rd Century Christian presbyter who was later dismissed as a heretic, this teaching holds that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are creations of the Father and are therefore not divine (note: this is very similar to *Monarchianism*). Arius held that the Son had a beginning because He was “begotten,” and that because the New Testament describes Him as growing and learning, He could not be divine. Universalists and Jehovah’s Witnesses would technically hold *Arianistic* views of Christ’s divinity. Both groups reduce Jesus Christ from God to a created being.

The common analogy used to demonstrate *Arianism* is that of the Sun: the Sun is the Father, the heat and the light energy are the Son and the Holy Spirit. This example is heresy because it espouses that the Son and the Spirit are creations of the Father, just as light and heat energy are creations of a star.

SUBORDINATIONISM

This doctrine asserts that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are inferior to God the Father in nature and being and are therefore “subordinate,” or of a lesser order or rank compared to the Father. One form of *Subordinationism* holds that though the Son *is* divine, He is not equal in being or attributes. The First Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.) condemned *Subordinationism* as a form of *Arianism*.

ECONOMIC SUBORDINATIONISM vs. ONTOLOGICAL SUBORDINATIONISM

Economic Subordinationism deals with the arrangement of activities while *Ontological Subordinationism* deals with the essence of being. To say that Jesus is ontologically subordinate to the Father is heresy—that is, He does *not* exist as an inferior person. But economically speaking (Greek *oikonomikos*—the arrangement of activities), Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are both subordinate to the Father. Jesus declared, “**I must be about my Father’s business**” (Luke 2:49) and “**Not my will, but thy will be done**” (Matthew 26:42). Of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, “**He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall He speak**” (John 16:13). See also John 5:37 and 6:38 and Hebrews 10:7.

THE FIRST COUNCIL OF NICAEA (325 A.D.)

These heresies arose as the Early Church was being established and working out doctrine. Consequently, at the recommendation of a synod-led Hosius of Cordoba, Emperor Constantine I convened this most famous council to respond to the arising heresies, most notably *Arianism*. The assembled church bishops agreed upon a statement of faith drafted to summarily refute the anti-Trinitarian heresies of their day. This refutation is called the Nicene Creed:

THE NICENE CREED

WE BELIEVE in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Athanasian Creed

Ca. Late 5th-early 6th Century

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic (general) faith. Which faith unless every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the catholic (general) faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Essence. For there is one Person of the Father; another of the Son; and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is; such is the Son; and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreated; the Son uncreated; and the Holy Ghost uncreated. The Father unlimited; the Son unlimited; and the Holy Ghost unlimited. The Father eternal; the Son eternal; and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three eternal; but one eternal. As also there are not three uncreated; nor three infinites, but one uncreated; and one infinite. So likewise the Father is Almighty; the Son Almighty; and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet they are not three Almighties; but one Almighty. So the Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods; but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord; the Son Lord; and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords; but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity; to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord; So are we forbidden by the catholic religion; to say, There are three Gods, or three Lords. The Father is made of none; neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created; but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten; but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is before, or after another; none is greater, or less than another. But the whole three Persons are coeternal, and coequal. So that in all things, as aforesaid; the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved, let him thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation; that he also believe faithfully the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess; that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God, of the Substance [Essence] of the Father; begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the Substance [Essence] of his Mother, born in the world. Perfect God; and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father as touching his Manhood. Who although he is God and Man; yet he is not two, but one Christ. One; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh; but by assumption of the Manhood into God. One altogether; not by confusion of Substance [Essence]; but by unity of Person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man; so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation; descended into hell; rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence he will come to judge the living and the dead. At whose coming all men will rise again with their bodies; And shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire. This is the catholic faith; which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved.