

THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

I. THERE IS ONE GOD

A. One God: explicit statements

1. OT: Deut. 4:35, 39; 32:39; 2 Sam. 22:32; Isa. 37:20; 43:10; 44:6-8; 45:5, 14, 21-22; 46:9
2. NT: John 5:44; Rom. 3:30; 16:27; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Gal. 3:20; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2:5; James 2:19; Jude 25

B. There is none like God (in His essence)

1. Explicit statements: Ex. 8:10; 9:14; 15:11; 2 Sam. 7:22; 1 Chr. 17:20; Psa 86:8; 1 Kgs. 8:23; Isa. 40:18, 25; 44:7; 46:5, 9; Jer. 10:6-7; Micah 7:18
2. Being like God a Satanic lie: Gen. 3:5; Isa. 14:14; John 8:44
3. Fallen man became "like God" only in that he took upon himself to know good and evil, not that he acquired godhood: Gen. 3:22

C. There is only one *true* God: 2 Chr. 15:3; Jer. 10:10; John 17:3; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 John 5:20-21

D. All other "gods" are therefore false gods (idols), not gods at all: Deut. 32:21; 1 Sam. 12:21; Psa. 96:5; Isa. 37:19; 41:23-24, 29; Jer. 2:11; 5:7; 16:20; 1 Cor. 8:4; 10:19-20

E. Demons, not gods, are the powers behind false worship: Deut. 32:17; Psa. 106:37; 1 Cor. 10:20; Gal. 4:8

F. How men are meant to be "like God"

1. The image of God indicates that man is to represent God and share His moral character, not that man can be metaphysically like God: Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 1 Cor. 11:7; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10
2. The goal of being like Christ has the following aspects only:
 - a. Sharing His moral character: 1 John 3:2; Rom. 8:29
 - b. Being raised with glorified, immortal bodies like His: Phil. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:49
3. Becoming partakers of the divine nature refers again to moral nature ("having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust"), not metaphysical nature: 2 Pet. 1:4; see also Heb. 12:10; on the meaning of "partakers," see 1 Cor. 10:18, 20; 2 Cor. 1:17; 1 Pet. 5:1

G. Are mighty or exalted men gods?

1. No Scripture says explicitly that men *are* gods
2. Powerful, mighty men are explicitly said not to be gods: Ezek. 28:2, 9; Isa. 31:3; 2 Thess. 2:4
3. Men and God are opposite, exclusive categories: Num. 23:19; Isa. 31:3; Ezek. 28:2, 9; Hosea 11:9; Matt. 19:26; John 10:33; Acts 12:22; 1 Cor. 14:2
4. Moses was "as God," not really a god: Ex. 4:16; 7:1
5. Ezek. 32:21 speaks of warriors or soldiers as "mighty gods," but in context they are so regarded by their pagan nations, not by God or Israel; cf. Ezek. 28:2, 9
6. The *elohim* before whom accused stood in Exodus was God Himself, not judges, as many translations incorrectly render: Ex. 22:8-9, 28: compare Deut. 19:17
7. The use of *elohim* in Psalm 82, probably in reference to wicked judges, as cited by Jesus in John 10:34-36, does not mean that men really can be gods.
 - a. It is Asaph, not the Lord, who calls the judges *elohim* in Psa. 82:1, 6. This is important, even though we agree that Psa. 82 is inspired.
 - b. Asaph's meaning is not, "Although you are gods, you will die like men" (which is how Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, etc., read it), but rather, "I called you gods, but in fact you will all die like the men that you really are."
 - c. The Psalmist was no more saying that wicked judges were truly gods than he was saying that they were truly "sons of the Most High" (v. 6b).
 - d. Thus, Psa. 82:1 calls the judges *elohim* in irony. They had quite likely taken their role in judgment (cf. point 5. above) to mean they were *elohim*, or gods, and Asaph's message is that these so-called gods were mere men who would die under the judgment of the true *elohim* (vss. 1-2, 7-8).

- e. Christ's use of this passage in John 10:34-36 does not negate the above interpretation of Psalm 82.
 - f. The words, "the Scripture cannot be broken," means "the Scripture cannot go without having some ultimate fulfillment" (cf. John 7:23; Matt. 5:17). Thus Jesus is saying that what the OT judges were called in irony, He is in reality; He does what they could not do, and is what they could never be (see the Adam-Christ contrasts in Rom. 5:12-21 and 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45 for a similar use of OT Scripture).
 - g. The clause, "those against whom the word of God came" (John 10:35) shows that this "word" was a word of judgment against the so-called gods; which shows that they were false gods, not really gods at all.
 - h. Finally, these wicked men were certainly not "godlike" or "divine" by nature, so that in any case the use of *elohim* to refer to them must be seen as figurative, not literal.
8. Even if men were gods (which they are not), this would be irrelevant to Jesus, since He was God (or "a god," as the Jehovah's Witnesses translate) as a preexistent spirit before creation: John 1:1

H. Are angels gods?

- 1. No Scripture explicitly states that angels are gods
- 2. Demonic spirits are not gods, 1 Cor. 10:20; Gal. 4:8; thus, being "mighty spirits" does not make angels gods
- 3. Satan is therefore also a false god: 2 Cor. 4:4
- 4. Psalm 8:5 does not teach that angels are gods.
 - a. Psa. 8:5 is paraphrased in Heb. 2:7, not quoted literally (cf. Psa. 68:18 with Eph. 4:8). In Psa. 8:5, *elohim* certainly means God, not angels, since Psa. 8:3-8 parallels Gen. 1:1, 8, 16, 26-28. Note that the Psalmist is speaking the man's exalted place in creation, whereas Hebrews is speaking of the lower place taken by Christ in becoming a man. Thus, Heb. 2:7 may not mean to equate angels with gods at all.
 - b. Even if Heb. 2:7 does imply that angels are "gods," in the context of Hebrews 1-2 these angels would be those falsely exalted above Christ: Note Heb. 1:6 (which quotes Psa. 97:7, which definitely speaks of "gods" in the sense of false gods); and cf. Col. 2:16 on the problem of the worship of angels
- 5. Elsewhere in the Psalms angels, if spoken of as gods, are considered false gods: Psa. 29:1; 86:8-10; 89:6; 95:3; 96:4-5; 97:7-9; 135:5; 136:2; 138:1; cf. Ex. 15:11; 18:11; Deut. 10:17; 1 Chr. 16:25; 2 Chr. 2:5
- 6. Even if angels were gods (which the above shows they are not), that would be irrelevant to Jesus, since He is not an angelic being, but the Son who is worshipped by the angels as their Creator, Lord, and God: Heb. 1:1-13

- I. Conclusion: If there is only one God, one true God, all other gods being false gods, neither men nor angels being gods, and none even like God by nature -- all of which the Bible says repeatedly and explicitly -- then we must conclude that there is indeed only one God.

II. THIS ONE GOD IS KNOWN IN THE OT AS JEHOVAH/YAHWEH ("THE LORD")

- A. Texts where Jehovah is said to be *elohim* or *el*: Deut. 4:35, 39; Psa. 100:3; etc.
- B. Texts where the compound "Jehovah God" (*Yahweh Elohim*) is used: Gen. 2-3; 9:26; 24; Ex. 3:15-18; 4:5; 2 Sam. 7:22, 25; etc.
- C. Conclusion: Jehovah is the only God, the only *el/elohim*

III. GOD IS A UNIQUE, INCOMPREHENSIBLE BEING

- A. There is only one God, thus unique: see I.A.
- B. There is none even like God: see I.B.
- C. God cannot be fully comprehended: 1 Cor. 8:2-3
- D. God can only be known insofar as the Son reveals Him: Matt. 11:25-27; John 1:18
- E. Analogical language needed to describe God: Ezek. 1:26-28 Rev. 1:13-16

- F. God is transcendent, entirely distinct from and different than the universe, as the carpenter is distinct from the bench
1. God is separate from the world: Isa. 40:22; Acts 17:24
 2. God is contrasted with the world: Psa. 102:25-27; 1 John 2:15-17
 3. God created the world: Gen. 1:1; Psa. 33:6; 102:25; Isa. 42:5; 44:24; John 1:3; Rom. 11:36; Heb. 1:2; 11:3

IV. THE FATHER OF JESUS CHRIST IS GOD

- A. Explicit statements: John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; etc.
- B. The expression, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ": 2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3

V. JESUS CHRIST IS GOD

- A. Explicit statements:
 1. Isa. 9:6; note 10:21. Trans. which render "mighty hero," etc., are inconsistent in their rendering of 10:21. Also note that Ezek. 32:21 is (a) not in the same context, as is Isa. 10:21, and (b) speaking of false gods, cf. I.G.5. above.
 2. John 1:1. Even if Jesus here is called "a god" (NWT), since there is only one God, Jesus is that God. However, the NWT rendering is a mistranslation. Other passages using the Greek word for God (*theos*) in the same construction are always rendered "God": Mark 12:27; Luke 20:38; John 8:54; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 11:16. Passages in which a shift occurs from *ho theos* ("the God") to *theos* ("God") never imply a shift in meaning: Mark 12:27; Luke 20:37-38; John 3:2; 13:3; Rom. 1:21; 1 Thess. 1:9; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 4:10-11.
 3. John 1:18. The best manuscripts have "the unique God" (*monogenes*, frequently rendered "only-begotten," actually means "one of a kind," "unique," though in the NT always in context of a son or daughter). Even if one translates "only-begotten," the idea is not of a "begotten god" as opposed to an "unbegotten god."
 4. John 20:28. Compare Rev. 4:11, where the same construction is used in the plural ("our") instead of the singular ("my"). See also Psa. 35:23. Note that Christ's response indicates that Thomas's acclamation was not wrong. Also note that John 20:17 does show that the Father was Jesus' "God" (due to Jesus becoming a man), but the words "my God" as spoken by Thomas later in the same chapter must mean no less than in v. 17. Thus, what the Father is to Jesus in His humanity, Jesus is to Thomas (and therefore to us as well).
 5. Acts 20:28: "the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." The variant readings (e.g., "the church of the Lord") show that the original was understood to mean "His own blood," not "the blood of His own [Son]" (since otherwise no one would have thought to change it). Thus, all other renderings are attempts to evade the startling clarity and meaning of this passage.
 6. Rom. 9:5. While grammatically this is not the only possible interpretation, the consistent form of doxologies in Scripture, as well as the smoothest reading of the text, supports the identification of Christ as "God" in this verse.
 7. Titus 2:13. Grammatically and contextually, this is one of the strongest proof-texts for the deity of Christ. Sharp's first rule, properly understood, proves that the text should be translated "our great God and Savior" (cf. same construction in Luke 20:37; Rev. 1:6; and many other passages). Note also that Paul always uses the word "manifestation" ("appearing") of Christ: 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 1:10; 4:1, 8.
 8. Heb. 1:8. The rendering, "God is your throne," is nonsense -- God is not a throne, He is the one who sits on the throne! Also "God is your throne," if taken to mean God is the source of one's rule, could be said about any angelic ruler -- but Hebrews 1 is arguing that Jesus is superior to the angels.
 9. 2 Pet. 1:1. The same construction is used here as in Titus 2:13; see the parallel passage in 2 Pet. 1:11; 2:20; 3:2, 18.

10. 1 John 5:20. Note that the most obvious antecedent for "this" is Jesus Christ. Also note that the "eternal life" is Christ, as can be seen from 1:2.
- B. Jesus is Jehovah/Yahweh:
1. Rom. 10:9-13. Note the repeated "for," which links these verses closely together. The "Lord" of 10:13 must be the "Lord" of 10:9, 12.
 2. Phil. 2:9-11. In context, the "name that is above every name" is "Lord" (vs. 11), i.e., Jehovah.
 3. Heb. 1:10. Here God the Father addresses the Son as "Lord," in a quotation of Psa. 102:25 (cf. 102:24, where the person addressed is called "God"). Since here the Father addresses the Son as "Lord," this cannot be explained away as a text in which a creature addresses Christ as God/Lord in a merely representational sense.
 4. 1 Pet. 2:3. This verse is nearly an exact quotation of Psa. 34:8a, where "Lord" is Jehovah. From 1 Pet. 2:4-8 it is also clear that "the Lord" in v. 3 is Jesus.
 5. 1 Pet. 3:14-15. These verses are a clear reference to Isa. 8:12-13, where the one who is to be regarded as holy is Jehovah.
- C. Jesus has the titles of God
1. Titles belonging only to God
 - a. The first and the last: Rev. 1:17; 22:13; cf. Isa. 44:6
 - b. King of kings and Lord of lords: 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16
 2. Titles belonging in the ultimate sense only to God
 - a. Savior: Luke 2:11; John 4:42; 1 John 4:14; Tit. 2:13, cf. v. 10; etc.; cf. Isa. 43:11; 45:21-22; 1 Tim. 4:10; on Jesus becoming the source of salvation, Heb. 5:9, cf. Ex. 15:2; Psa. 118:14, 21
 - b. Shepherd: John 10:11; Heb. 13:20; cf. Psa. 23:1; Isa. 40:11
 - c. Rock: 1 Cor. 10:4; cf. Isa. 44:8
- D. Jesus receives the honors due to God alone
1. Honor: John 5:23
 2. Love: Matt. 10:37
 3. Prayer: John 14:14 (text debated, but in any case it is Jesus who answers the prayer); Acts 7:59-60 (cf. Luke 23:34, 46); Rom. 10:12-13; 1 Cor. 1:2; etc.
 4. Worship (*proskuneo*): Matt. 28:17; Heb. 1:6 (cf. Psa. 97:7); cf. Matt. 4:10
 5. Religious or sacred service (*latreuo*): Rev. 22:13
 6. Faith: John 3:16; 14:1; etc.
- E. Jesus does the works of God
1. Creation: John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2; Rev. 3:14 (cf. 21:6 on "beginning"); on "through" and "in" cf. Rom. 11:36; Heb. 2:10; Acts 17:28; cf. also Isa. 44:24
 2. Sustaining the universe: Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3
 3. Salvation: See C.2.a. above.
 4. All of them: John 5:17-29
- F. Jesus has all of the incommunicable attributes of God
1. All of them: John 1:1; Col. 1:15; 2:9; Heb. 1:3
 2. Is self-existent: John 5:26
 3. Is unchangeable: Heb. 1:10-12; 13:8
 4. Is eternal: John 1:1; 8:58; 17:5; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:2
 5. Is omnipresent: Matt. 18:20; 28:20; John 3:13; Eph. 1:23; 4:10; Col. 3:11
 6. Is omniscient: John 16:30
 7. Is incomprehensible: Matt. 11:25-27
- G. Jesus is the *Son* of God
1. "Son" in Scripture can mean simply one possessing the nature of something, whether literal or figurative (e.g., "Son of man," "sons of thunder," "sons of disobedience," cf. Mark 3:17; Eph. 2:1)
 2. Whenever "son of" is used in relation to a person (son of man, son of Abraham, son of David, etc.), the son possesses the nature of his father

3. Jesus is clearly not the Son of God in a *literal* sense, i.e., He was not physically procreated by God
4. On the other hand, Jesus is clearly the Son of God in a unique sense (cf. "only-begotten Son," John 1:14; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9) and in a preeminent sense (i.e., the term is more fitting for Him than for anyone else)
5. Scripture is explicit that the Son possesses God's essence or nature (cf. F. above)
6. Jesus' repeated claim to be the Son of God was consistently understood by the Jewish leaders as a blasphemous claim to equality with God, an understanding Jesus never denied: John 5:17-23; 8:58-59; 10:30-39; 19:7; Matt. 26:63-65
7. Jesus is therefore God's *Son*, not God's creation, God's servant, God's agent, etc. Jesus is God's Son who *became* a servant for our sake and for the Father's glory (John 13:13-15; 17:4; Phil. 2:6-11; Heb. 1:4-13; 3:1-6; 5:8; etc.)

H. Objections

1. Prov. 8:22: This text is not a literal description of Christ, but a poetic personification of wisdom (cf. all of Prov. 1-9, esp. 8:12-21; 9:1-6), poetically saying that God "got" His wisdom before He did anything -- i.e., that God has always had wisdom.
2. Col. 1:15: Does not mean that Christ is the first creature, since He is here presented as the Son and principal heir of the Father (cf. vv. 12-14); thus "firstborn" here means "heir" (cf. Gen. 43:33; 48:14-20; Ex. 4:22; 1 Chron. 5:1-3; Psa. 89:27; Jer. 31:9); note that v. 16 speaks of the Son as Creator, not creature (cf. E.1. above)
3. Rev. 3:14: "Beginning" (*arche*) in Rev. as a title means source or one who begins, i.e., Creator (cf. Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13); elsewhere Christ is called the *arche* in the sense of "ruler," Col. 1:18, cf. plural *archai* "rulers" in Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15, also Luke 12:11; Rom. 8:38; Eph. 3:10; 6:12; Tit. 3:1; cf. Luke 20:20; Jude 6; 1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21
4. 1 Cor. 11:3; 15:28. Jesus is still subordinate to God, but as the Son to the Father; i.e., they are equal in nature, but the Son is subordinate relationally to the Father
5. John 20:17; Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 15:24; 2 Cor. 1:3; Rev. 1:6; 3:12: Jesus calls the Father "My God" because He is still man as well as God; note the distinction between "My God" and "your God" in John 20:17 (i.e., Jesus never speaks of "our God" including Himself with the disciples)
6. Mark 13:32: Jesus' statement that He did not know the time of His return is to be explained by His voluntary acceptance of the humble form and likeness of a man (Phil. 2:7); in fact as God Jesus did know all things (John 16:30), and after His resurrection He does not include Himself as not knowing (Acts 1:6-7)
7. Mark 10:17-18: Jesus does not deny being God, but simply tells the man that he has no business calling anyone "good" in an unqualified sense except God
8. Heb. 5:14: Jesus was tempted, cf. James 1:13; but note that Jesus could not sin, John 5:19
9. John 1:18: No one has seen God, but men have seen Jesus, e.g., 1 John 1:1-2; but note that no man can see the glorified Jesus either, 1 Tim. 6:16, and that to see Jesus is to see the Father, John 14:9
10. 1 Tim. 1:17: God cannot die, but Jesus did, e.g., Phil. 2:8; but note that no one could take Jesus' life from Him, He could not remain dead, and He raised Himself: John 10:18; Acts 2:24; John 2:19-22
11. 1 Cor. 8:6: Father called God, Jesus called Lord: but here "God" and "Lord" are synonymous (cf. v. 5); moreover, this text no more denies that Jesus is God than it does that the Father is Lord (Matt. 11:25); cf. Jude 4, where Jesus is the only Lord
12. 1 Tim. 2:5: Jesus here supposedly distinct from God; but Jesus is also distinct from (fallen) men, yet is Himself a man; likewise Jesus is distinct from God (the Father), but is also God
13. Deut. 4:12, 15-25: God did not appear in a human form to Israel, lest they fall into idolatry; but this does not rule out His appearing in human form later after they had learned to abhor idolatry

VI. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD

- A. The Holy Spirit is equated with God: Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 3:17-18
- B. Has the incommunicable attributes of God
 - 1. Eternal: Heb. 9:14
 - 2. Omnipresent: Psa. 139:7
 - 3. Omniscient: 1 Cor. 2:10-11
- C. Is involved in all of the works of God
 - 1. Creation: Gen. 1:2; Psa. 104:30
 - 2. Incarnation: Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35
 - 3. Resurrection: Rom. 1:4; 8:11
 - 4. Salvation: Rom. 8:1-27
- D. Is a person
 - 1. Has a name: Matt. 28:19; note that even though "name" *might* be used of a nonperson, here, in conjunction with the Father and the Son, it must be used of a person
 - 2. Is the "Helper"
 - a. Is *another Helper*: John 14:16, cf. 1 John 2:1; note also that "Helper" (*parakletos*) was used in Greek always or almost always of persons
 - b. Is sent in Jesus' name, to teach: John 14:26
 - c. Will arrive, and then bear witness: John 15:26-27
 - d. Is sent by Christ to convict of sin, will speak not on his own but on behalf of Christ
 - e. Will glorify Christ, thus exhibiting humility: John 16:7-14
 - 3. Is the *Holy Spirit*, in contrast to unholy spirits: Mark 3:22-30, cf. Matt. 12:32; 1 Tim. 4:1; 1 John 3:24-4:6
 - 4. "Impersonal" language used of the Spirit paralleled by language used of other persons
 - a. The Holy Spirit as fire: Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; cf. Ex. 3:2-4; Deut. 4:24; 9:3; Heb. 12:29
 - b. The Holy Spirit poured out: Acts 2:17, 33; cf. Isa. 53:12; Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6
 - c. Being filled with the Holy Spirit: Eph. 5:18, etc.; cf. Eph. 3:17, 19; 4:10

VII. THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT ARE DISTINCT PERSONS

- A. Matt. 28:19
 - 1. "the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit": use of definite article before each personal noun indicates distinct persons unless explicitly stated otherwise; compare Rev. 1:17; 2:8, 26.
 - 2. Jehovah's Witnesses, Armstrongites, etc., argue that "Father" and "Son" are distinct persons but Holy Spirit is not a person at all; Oneness Pentecostals argue that all three are different offices or roles of one person. Both views are impossible in view of the grammar.
 - 3. Does singular "name" prove that the three are one person? No; compare Gen. 5:2; 11:4; 48:6; and especially 48:16!
 - 4. "Name" need not be personal name, may be title: Isa. 9:6; Matt. 1:23. If a single personal name is sought, the name shared by all three persons is "Yahweh" or "Jehovah."
- B. Acts 2:38 and Matt. 28:19
 - 1. Neither passage specifies that certain words are to be spoken during baptism; nor does the Bible ever record someone saying, "I baptize you in the name of..."
 - 2. Those said to be baptized in the name of Jesus (whether or not the formula "in the name of Jesus" was used) were people already familiar with the God of the OT:
 - a. Jews: Acts 2:5, 38; 22:16
 - b. Samaritans: Acts 8:5, 12, 16
 - c. God-fearing Gentiles: Acts 10:1-2, 22, 48
 - d. Disciples of John the Baptist: Acts 19:1-5
 - e. The first Christians in Corinth were Jews and God-fearing Gentiles: Acts 18:1-8; 1 Cor. 1:13
 - 3. Trinitarian formula for baptism (if that is what Matt. 28:19 is) was given in context of commissioning apostles to take the gospel to "all the nations," including people who did not know of the biblical God.

C. Father and Son are two persons

1. The salutations: Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; 6:23; Phil. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1, 2; 1 Tim. 1:1, 2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; Phm. 3; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:2; 2 John 3.
2. Two witnesses; John 5:31-32; 8:16-18; compare Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15.
3. The Father sent the Son: John 3:17; Gal. 4:4; 1 John 4:10; etc.; compare John 1:6; 17:18; 20:21.
4. The Father and the Son love each other: John 3:35; 14:31; 17:23-26.
5. The Father speaks to the Son, and the Son speaks to the Father: John 11:41-42; 12:28; 17:1-26; etc.

D. Jesus is not God the Father

1. Isa. 9:6. "Father of eternity" means eternal; compare other names formed with word "father":
 - a. *Abialbon*, "father of strength" = strong (2 Sam. 23:31)
 - b. *Abiasaph*, "father of gathering" = gatherer (Ex. 6:24)
2. John 10:30
 - a. Jesus did not say, "I am the Father," nor did He say, "the Son and the Father are one person."
 - b. The first person plural *esmen* ("are") implies "we," thus two persons.
 - c. The neuter word for "one" (*hen*) is used, implying essential unity but not personal unity (compare John 17:21-23).
3. John 5:43
 - a. Oneness interpretation: Jesus' coming in His Father's name means He was the Father because He had the Father's name.
 - b. Actual meaning: Others come in their own name (or their own authority), but Jesus does not; Jesus comes in His Father's name (on His Father's authority).
4. John 14:6-11
 - a. Jesus and the Father are one being, not one person.
 - b. Jesus said, "I am in the Father," not, "I am the Father."
 - c. The statement, "the Father is in Me," does not mean Jesus is the Father; compare John 14:20; 17:21-23.
5. Colossians 2:9
 - a. Oneness argument: The Godhead, which is the entire being of God, is in Jesus; Jesus is not the Godhead.
 - b. Trinitarian interpretation; "Godhead" means Deity, the state of being God, the nature of God; thus Jesus is fully God, but not the only person who is God. Since Oneness makes "the Godhead" = the Father, they cannot say that Jesus is "not in the Godhead," since Jesus is in the Father (John 10:38; 14:10, 11; 17:21).

E. The Son existed before His incarnation, even before creation.

1. Prov. 30:4. This is not a predictive prophecy; "prophecy" in 30:1 translates *massa*, which is rendered elsewhere as "burden."
2. The Son created all things: see V.E.1.
3. Jesus was "with" (*pros* or *para*) God the Father before creation: John 1:1; 17:5; *pros* in John 1:1 does not mean "pertaining to," although it does in Hebrews 2:17; 5:1.
4. These statements cannot be dismissed as true in God's foreknowledge.
 - a. We are all in God's mind before creation; yet such passages as John 1:1 and John 17:5 clearly mean to say something unusual about Christ.
 - b. To say that all things were created through Christ means He must have existed at creation.
 - c. No one else in Scripture is ever said to have been with God before creation.

F. Jesus is not the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit is "another Comforter" (John 14:16; compare 1 John 2:1).
2. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit (John 15:26; 16:7).
3. The Holy Spirit exhibits humility (John 16:13) and seek to glorify Jesus (John 16:14).
4. The Son and the Holy Spirit are distinguished as two persons in Matt. 28:19.

5. The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus (Luke 3:22).
 6. Texts commonly used to prove that Jesus is the Holy Spirit
 - a. 2 Cor. 3:17 -- the Spirit is here called "Lord" in the sense of being Yahweh or God, not Jesus; note Acts 28:25-27 cf. Isa.6:8-10.
 - b. 1 Cor. 15:45 -- Jesus is "a life-giving Spirit," not in the sense that He is the Holy Spirit whom He sent at Pentecost, but in the sense that He is the glorified God-man; and as God He is Spirit by nature. All three persons of the Trinity are Spirit, though there are not three divine Spirits; and only one person is designated "the Holy Spirit."
 - c. Rom. 8:27,34 -- the fact that two persons intercede for us is consistent with the fact that we have two Advocates (John 14:16; 1 John 2:1).
 - d. John 14:18 -- Jesus here refers to His appearances to the disciples after the resurrection (compare 14:19), not to the coming of the Spirit.
- G. The Father is not the Holy Spirit
1. The Father sent the Holy Spirit (John 14:15; 15:26).
 2. The Holy Spirit intercedes with the Father for us (Rom. 8:26-27).
 3. The Father and the Holy Spirit are distinguished as two persons in Matt. 28:19).
 4. Arguments commonly used to prove that the Father is the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35 -- it is argued that the Holy Spirit is the Father of the incarnate Son of God; this argument ignores the fact that the "conception" is not a product of physical union between a man and a woman!
 - b. The Father and the Holy Spirit are both said to be active in various activities; the resurrection of Jesus (Gal. 1:1; Rom. 8:11), comforting Christians (2 Cor. 1:3-4; John 14:26), sanctifying Christians (Jude 1; 1 Peter 1:2), etc. The most these facts prove is that the two work together; they do not prove the two are one person.

VIII. CONCLUSION: THE BIBLE TEACHES THE TRINITY

- A. All the elements of the doctrine are taught in Scripture
 1. One God
 2. The Father is God
 3. The Son is God
 4. The Holy Spirit is God
 5. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three persons
- B. The Bible does not forbid using extrabiblical language to define and describe biblical truth.
- C. The Bible teaches that "the faith" (which would include the nature of the object of faith, a Triune God) was "delivered once for all to the saints" (Jude 3). Therefore any non-Trinitarian doctrine must be unbiblical.

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