

Doctrine of the One God



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JESUS

Paul Thomas

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DOCTRINE OF THE ONE GOD

1. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord

God is one. This is the greatest doctrine of the entire Bible. “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD” (Deut 6:4). When the Lord Jesus Christ was asked about the greatest commandment, the Bible records, “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord” (Mark 12:29). It is clear from the response of the scribe that the Jews understood “one” to mean one single person – “he”. “And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he” (Mark 12:32). What the above means is that there is no room whatsoever for a so-called doctrine of the “Holy Trinity”. What is the doctrine of the Trinity? In its most basic form, it states that “(1) God is three persons (2) Each person is fully God (3) There is one God” (Grudem, 1994, p. 231). The Trinitarian scholar, Wayne Grudem, goes on to clarify what is meant by “God is three persons”.

The fact that God is three persons means that the Father is not the Son; they are distinct persons. It also means that the Father is not the Holy Spirit, but that they are distinct persons. And it means that the Son is not the Holy Spirit (Grudem, 1994, p. 231).

It is important to understand that the word “distinct” is no different from the word “separate”. The Cambridge Dictionary¹ for example defines “distinct” as “clearly separate and different (from something else)”. The above demonstrates that the doctrine of the Trinity contradicts the greatest commandment in the Bible. If the “Father is not the Son”, as Grudem claims, then God cannot be “one”. Remember what the scribe replied when the Lord quoted Deuteronomy 6:4? He said, “...there is one God and none other but he” (Mark 12:32). If the personal pronoun “he” has any meaning, it ought to mean one, indivisible individual. The Bible clearly establishes that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all one and the same person. Seven hundred years before the Lord was born in Bethlehem, Isaiah prophesied, “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). The child or son is called “The everlasting Father”, according to Isaiah. The Bible always provides several confirmations of vital doctrines. When the Apostles

¹ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/distinct>

suspected the Lord was claiming to be identical with the Father himself, Philip requested to see the Father because he did not think the Lord Jesus was the Father. The Lord's response to Philip disproves the teaching of the doctrine of the Trinity.

John 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

John 14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

2. The one God was manifested in the flesh

God who is one and cannot be divided was manifested in the flesh. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (I Timothy 3:16). In other words, when the Apostles saw the Lord Jesus, they were looking at the outward, physical manifestation of the one God who had no visible form prior to this. It is for this reason the Apostle Paul declares to the Colossian church, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col 2:9). Put differently, all that is God is found in Jesus. There is no God outside of Jesus because the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are titles of the same God whose name is Jesus. Anyone looking for God will find him indwelling permanently in the body of Jesus. This explains why the voice from heaven instructed the Apostles to pay attention to the body of Jesus.

Matt 17:5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

This doctrine of the Trinity does not line up with this teaching. The Trinity teaches that there are three separate persons, and one of them, God the Son, was manifested as a human being. While very confusing, let us nevertheless try to understand their conception of God the Son through this quote from one of their most eminent scholars, Louis Berkhof:

It is that eternal and necessary act of the first person in the Trinity, whereby He, within the divine Being, is the ground of a second personal subsistence like His own, and puts this second person in possession of the whole divine essence, without any division, alienation, or change (Berkhof, 2003, p. 94).

In simple English, Berkhof is saying that the Father gave birth to the Son, and gave the Son the same Godhead and characteristics as the Father himself possessed. Berkhof is essentially saying that the Father gave birth to another God who was identical and yet separate from the Father. The Trinity runs into a serious problem when it comes to Trinitarians' explanation for their belief in the existence of an "eternal Son" who was at the same time begotten of the Father. Either the Son had a beginning, as the Bible clearly states, or the Son can never be called the Son since he was eternal and never begotten. Recognizing this dilemma, Trinitarian theologians invented the doctrine of the "eternally begotten Son". The early north African scholar, Origen of Alexandria (185-253 AD), is often credited with inventing the doctrine of the "eternally begotten Son" or the "eternal generation of the Son". He wrote that the Son is equal with God the Father "because this generation is as eternal and everlasting as the brilliancy which is produced by the sun. For it is not by receiving the breath of life that he is made a Son, by an outward act, but by His own nature" (Olson, 1999, p. 110). Contrary to Origen, the Bible makes it plain that the Son had no separate existence before the Word was made flesh, and no "eternal generation" from the Father.

Psalm 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Gal 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.

There was a time that God had no flesh. He was only Spirit. Humans interacted with God through his Spirit and Word. Only in Jesus did God manifest himself in flesh and was known to his Apostles. The Apostle John, for instance, was in awe of this manifestation of God in the flesh. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) (I John 1:1, 2). It must be repeated again: the flesh of God had a beginning but that does not mean it was created. The Bible says that the flesh of God was begotten. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). When we say the name Jesus, we are referring to the one God who is Spirit, Word and flesh. God's Spirit, Word and flesh are inseparable. This is what Jesus meant when he stated, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). The Apostle John emphasizes this greatest of all revelations when he declares:

1John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

1John 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

In summary, the doctrine of biblical salvation declares that God is one. This one God cannot be conceived of as existing as three separate persons. God now exists as one person. The Father's word was made flesh and he now dwells in his own body. The name of God since this event is Jesus. Those who wish to please God cannot believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. Even authoritative Trinitarian sources admit that the Trinity is not in the Bible. "The term 'Trinity' is not a Biblical term, and we are not using Biblical language when we define what is expressed by it as the doctrine that there is one only and true God ..." (The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, 1986, p. 3012). Speaking about the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD, the theologian, Roger Olson (1999, p. 194) asks the question, "What does it all mean? Can the seemingly abstruse and speculative doctrine of the Trinity as it developed throughout the fourth century and as it was declared at the Council of Constantinople be made somewhat intelligible for ordinary people who are not scholars?" Finally, Berkhof (2003, p. 89) writes "The Church confesses the Trinity to be a mystery beyond the comprehension of man ... man cannot comprehend it and make it intelligible".

We argue, based on the statements of Trinitarians themselves, that the Trinity is unintelligible because it is unbiblical. God issues a warning in the Bible: "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30: 5,6). The Apostle Paul declared confidently that he had the revelation of the mystery of Christ. He did not state, as Trinitarians do, that the mystery of God in the Trinity is unintelligible and incomprehensible.

Eph 3:4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

Eph 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

Scriptures that affirm that God is one and alone.

1. **Deuteronomy 4:35,39** — Unto thee it was shown, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; **there is none else beside him.** (39) Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: **there is none else.**
2. **Deuteronomy 6:4** — Hear, O Israel: **The LORD thy God is one LORD.** [Corresponds to Mark 12:28-34 where the scribe called God “he”.
3. **Deuteronomy 32:39** — See now that I, even I, am he, and **there is no god with me:** I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.
4. **2 Samuel 7:22** — Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God; for there is none like thee, **neither is there any God beside thee,** according to all that we have heard with our ears.
5. **1 Kings 8:60** — That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, **and that there is none else.**
6. **2 Kings 5:15** — And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that **there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel;** now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.
7. **2 Kings 19:15** — And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, **even thou alone,** of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.
8. **1 Chronicles 17:20** — O LORD, there is none like thee, **neither is there any God beside thee,** according to all that we have heard with our ears.
9. **Nehemiah 9:6** — Thou, even **thou, art LORD alone;** thou has made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.
10. **Psalms 18:31** — For **who is God save the LORD?** or who is a rock save our God?
11. **Psalms 86:10** — For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: **thou art God alone.**
12. **Isaiah 37:16,20** — O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, **even thou alone,** of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou has made heaven and earth. (20) Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD, even thou only.
13. **Isaiah 43:10,11** — Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: **before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.** I, even I, am the LORD; **and beside me there is no savior.**
14. **Isaiah 44:6,8** — Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; **I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.** Fear ye not, neither be afraid; have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.

15. **Isaiah 45:21** — Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time: who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and **there is no God else beside me**; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me.

16. **Isaiah 46:9** — For I am God, and **there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me**.

17. **Hosea 13:4** — Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me; for **there is no savior beside me**.

18. **Joel 2:27** — And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I **am the LORD your God, and none else**: and my people shall never be ashamed.

19. **Zechariah 14:9** — And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall **there be one Lord, and his name one**.

20. **Mark 12:29-34** — And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; **The Lord our God is one Lord**: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: **for there is one God; and there is none other but he ...**

21. **John 17:3** — And this is life eternal, that they might know thee **the only true God**, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

22. **Romans 3:30** — Seeing it is **one God**, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

23. **1 Corinthians 8:4-6** — As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and **that there is none other God but one**. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) **But to us there is but one God**, the Father, of whom all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

24. **Galatians 3:20** — Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, **but God is one**.

25. **Ephesians 4:6** — **One God and Father of all**, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

26. **1 Timothy 1:17** — Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, **the only wise God**, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

27. **1 Timothy 2:5** — **For there is one God**, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

28. **James 2:19** — Thou believest that **there is one God**; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

29. **1John 5:20** And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God, and eternal life**.