

UNDERSTANDING THE GODHEAD (2 Corinthians 13:14)

The Unity and Trinity of God

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Introduction:

1. Someone asks ‘Who is Fred?’

- Oh Fred, he is a Building Contractor.... Also a husband... Also a father... also a Christian...
- Wait a minute, are we talking about the same person? —How can he be all these things?
- IS THIS A CONTRADICTION? If all these are True—there is no contradiction!

2. Psalm 119:160 ‘The Sum of the Thy Word is Truth...’

- Not Only is Every Word inspired by God—All of God’s word is Truth
- The Idea that God is One and that God is Triune seems like a contradiction
- But When Both are True—There is No Contradiction

3. Our understanding of the Trinity is a discovery of the truth about God by looking at ALL the inspired Scriptures—OT and NT, not just one.

- For Example... someone asks, ‘Who is Jesus?’ —they find in scripture Jesus is: Prophet, Priest and King... are these separate people? —NO

(1) But if you discover Jesus is a Prophet—but NOT a Priest or King,
—we find His identity is reduced to that of a religious teacher.

(2) If We See Him as both a Prophet and King, we find Him portrayed as an authoritative religious teacher who rules over those He teaches—but doesn’t redeem.

(3) Only by bringing ALL THREE Roles Together Do We Have a True Understanding of Who Jesus Really is—The One Who Redeems Souls, Teaches Hearts and Rules as King.
(Alister McGrath, Understanding the Trinity p.136)

- So it is with our understanding of God—God is more Mysterious than we realize and what we find is not simply a difference in roles—it’s much deeper than that!
Let’s try to have a clearer view of the Unity and Trinity of God

I. UNDERSTANDING THE UNITY OF GOD—GOD IS ONE

A. THE ONE TRUE GOD

1. The One True and Living God (Deut. 6:4)

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord (YHWH) our God (Elohim), the Lord (YHWH) is one!” (Dt. 6:4)

2. Israel was to take the Promised Land that was totally given over to the idolatry of polytheism—the worship of false gods.

- God warned them and commanded them to tear down these Altars and High Places Dedicated to Worshipping Lies. (Deuteronomy 7:5–6)

3. Idol Worship Never Seems to Vanish so Paul repeated this Truth in the NT

- Because it affected Greek Christians who were leaving idolatry (1 Corinthians 8:4)
- This was Refreshing News to the Greek Gentile Christians who had grown up in a culture that never knew what idol god would be offended!
- Paul commends them for their faith in the One True God (1 Thessalonians 1:8–10)

B. THE ONE TRUE CREATOR

1. 'In the Beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.' (Gen. 1:1)

This One Single Truth Has Profound Implications!

- a) –It Denies ATHEISM for it declares the existence of God
- b) –It Denies POLYTHEISM for it confesses the One Eternal Creator
- c) –It Denies MATERIALISM for it asserts the creation of matter (It is not eternal)
- d) –It Denies PANTHEISM since the existence of God was before all things
- e) –It Denies FATALISM for it involves the free choice of the Eternal Being

2. ATHEISM is False—God exists and He is eternal

3. POLYTHEISM is False—there are not many or multiple gods, there is only One God—the true and living God!

4. PANTHEISM is False—everything is not God and God is not everything. God is the One True Creator.

- a) PANTHEISM is now popular again—The false idea that God is in everything and everything is a part of God.
- b) God created everything—but everything is NOT God
Everything is Made by God—but God is NOT everything created

Eastern Religions are Pantheist—A Buddhist Monk tried to pull this off by quoting 1 Bible verse taken out of context (Ps 46:10) “Be still and know that I am God...”

- c) **But Psalm 46:10 is GOD HIMSELF Speaking to Us**—but the Buddhist monk says it as if it refers to Him (the monk) — Be still and know that I am god (me)
- d) **I'm sorry Mr. Monk—there is only one true God—and you are not Him!**

C. THE ONE TRUE GOD WHO ALONE IS WORTHY OF WORSHIP

1. Since There is Only One True God—He Alone is Worthy of Worship

This is What Jesus told Satan (Matt 4:10)

2. Notice again when Jesus is asked a question by a Scribe (Mark 12:28–34)

- a) We are about to see that Jesus correctly identifies Himself as God—the Son...
- b) But He Is Not Claiming to be Another God or a Different God!
- c) If He Were He Would Not Have Told Satan or the Scribe to worship God Alone
- d) He Would be asking them to Split Their Allegiance Between the Two

II. UNDERSTANDING THE TRINITY OF GOD—GOD IS THREE

A. ONE OF THE DEEPEST AND MOST MYSTERIOUS TRUTHS OF GOD

1. God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit is a Mystery (1 Tim 3:16)

2. But a Mystery We Are Called to Understand (Ephesians 3:9; Col. 2:2–3)

3. The Word Trinity is not in the Bible—the Word Godhead is... which is a plural form of the word God

- a) **A Missionary named Patrick (385-461 ad)** took the gospel to Ireland... and to try and explain the Trinity—he used a Three Leaf Clover.
A physical representation of three as one / and one as three

4. **FOR EXAMPLE: You Are One Person—**
but you're made up of MIND, BODY and SPIRIT. (three in one)
- a) We are called to Love God with All Our HEART, SOUL and MIND
 - b) A Love that Encompasses our Intellect, Will and Emotions
 - c) Three that refer to the complete unity of the whole

B. THE TRINITY AS SEEN IN THE OT

We don't recognize the Trinity until the NT—but we can see a foreshadow of it in OT

1. **In Creation of the Cosmos (Genesis 1:1–3) God, the Spirit and the Word**
 - a) We see God (v.1) and the Spirit (v.2) and the Word (v.3) that became flesh (Jn 1:1-3)
2. **In the Creation of Mankind (Genesis 1:26)**
 - a) **EL** singular name of God... **ELOHIM** the plural name of God (Godhead)
 - b) Also Seen Again in Genesis 11:7 “Let Us...”
3. **In Several Mysterious Encounters in Genesis...**
 - a) The LORD (YHWH) appeared to Abraham (**Genesis 18:1–2**)
this is the personal divine name of God
and Told him He would have a child—then told him about Sodom
 - b) Two are identified as Angels (**19:1**) but one is identified as YHWH the LORD
 - c) Some call this a THEOPHANY: An Appearance of God the Son in OT
 - d) (**Gen 19:24**) Then the **Lord** rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah,
from the Lord out of the heavens.
4. **In the Promise of the Messiah (Micah 5:2)**
 - a) The One to be Born in Bethlehem would have already existed from Eternity!
5. **Notice the Prophecy of the Messiah in (Isaiah 9:6)**
 - a) He would be called—Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

C. THE TRINITY AS SEEN IN THE NT

It is not until the NT—that we can recognize the undeniable truth of the Trinity

1. **The Incarnation of Christ (Luke 1:35)**
2. **All Three Present at Jesus Baptism (Matthew 3:13–17)**
3. **Notice How Jesus prayed to the Father... (John 17:1–5)**
4. **All Three Are One— (1 Corinthians 12:4–6)**
5. **But the Interworking of the Trinity is Beyond Our Comprehension**
As you can see in (John 14:15–18)

6. **There Seems to be a Progressive Revelation of the Godhead in the Bible**
 - a) THE OT—The Revelation of the Father
 - b) THE GOSPELS—The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Word (Logos) became Flesh
 - c) THE BOOK OF ACTS—The Revelation of Holy Spirit
 - d) THE EPISTLES & REVELATION—Reveals the Entire Godhead at work

III. UNDERSTANDING THE IMPLICATIONS FOR US

A. BECAUSE THERE IS ONE GOD...

1. THERE IS ONE REVELATION (Ephesians 4:1-6)
2. THERE IS ONE FAITH (Jude 3)
3. THERE IS ONE SAVIOR (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

B. BECAUSE GOD IS ONE IN THREE PERSONS...

1. ALL THREE WERE INVOLVED IN CREATION (Gen 1:1,2; Jn 1:1-3)
2. ALL THREE ARE INVOLVED IN OUR CREATION (Gen 1:26)
3. ALL THREE ARE INVOLVED IN OUR RE-CREATION (Matthew 28:19)
 - a) All Three Were Present at Jesus Baptism and All Three at Our Baptism!
 - b) NOTICE THE SINGULAR OF THE GODHEAD...
 - c) Not in the Names(s) of... In the NAME OF...The Father, Son and Holy Spirit!
"Hear, O Israel: The Lord (YHWH) our God (Elohim), the Lord (YHWH) is one!" (Dt.6:4)
 - d) When we are united with Christ in Baptism—we are united with the entire Godhead!
 - e) Baptism is the Beginning Point of a New Relationship with God!
 - f) When You're Adopted into His Royal Family and Take On His Name!
4. ALL THREE ARE INVOLVED IN OUR SALVATION (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)
5. ALL THREE ARE INVOLVED IN OUR SANCTIFICATION (Hebrews 9:14)

C. GOD THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT HELP US!

1. ALL THREE HELP US IN DIFFERENT WAYS...
 - a) **GOD THE FATHER:** God the Father Loved the World and Sent His Son...
 - b) **GOD THE SON:** God the Son Jesus Died on the Cross For Our Sins
and is Now Our High Priest and Mediator
 - c) **GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT:** The Gift of the Holy Spirit is Given at Baptism (Acts 2:38)
2. IN PRAYER:
 - a) We Pray to the Father (Matthew 6:6, 9) as Jesus taught to do...
 - b) in the Name of Jesus (John 14:13-14)
 - c) and the Holy Spirit Intercedes for us in our Prayer! (Romans 8:26)
The Holy Spirit Comforts Us, Strengthens Us, and Intercedes For Us!
3. ALL THREE WORKING IN OUR LIFE (Romans 8:27-28)

CONCLUSION:

1. We May Not Be Able to Fully Comprehend the Godhead, but we do know:
 - 1) He is a Father that Loves Us
 - 2) He Loves Us to the Point that Jesus Christ Died for Us
 - 3) He Loves Us to the Point that The Holy Spirit Comforts Us and Intercedes for Us

**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)**