



T H E O L O G Y

T H U R S D A Y S





# THE TRIUNE GOD

Theology Thursdays



# FLAT STANLEY'S RUBIK'S CUBE



# THREE ESSENTIALS

1. God is One
2. God is three distinct persons
3. Each person is fully God



# **HERESY: DEPARTURE FROM ORTHODOXY**

**Heresies throughout history have attempted to deal with the complexity of the Trinity by taking away one of these three essentials.**



There are no enduring examples of heresies that have taken issue with monotheism. Likely, due to the fact that scripture is explicitly clear on this issue.



# **GOD IS ONE – O.T.**

**In the beginning, God created the  
heavens and the earth.**

Genesis 1:1



# GOD IS ONE - O.T.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God,  
the LORD is one.

Deuteronomy 6:4



# GOD IS ONE – O.T.

I am the LORD, and **there is no other,**  
**besides me there is no God;**

I equip you, though you do not know me,  
that people may know, from the rising of the sun  
and from the west, that there is none besides me;

**I am the LORD, and there is no other.**

Isaiah 45:5-6



# GOD IS ONE – O.T.

remember the former things of old;  
for I am God, and there is no other;  
I am God, and there is none like me,

Isaiah 46:9



# GOD IS ONE – N.T.

yet for us **there is one God**, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

1 Cor. 8:6



# GOD IS ONE – N.T.

And this is eternal life, that they know  
you, **the only true God...**

Jn 17:3



**GOD IS ONE – N.T.**

**For there is one God...**

1 Tim 2:5



In an effort to emphasize God being ONE, there was a heresy circulated in the early church called Modalism or Sabellianism. Modalists claim the solution to the mystery of God's nature is that He reveals himself in three "modes" or forms.



# DENY 3 DISTINCT PERSONS?

To deny personhood to each of the persons of the trinity, is to deny God's attribute of **independence**



# DENY 3 DISTINCT PERSONS?

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." Mt 3:16-17



# DENY 3 DISTINCT PERSONS?

He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” Mt. 17:5



# DENY 3 DISTINCT PERSONS?

Failure to acknowledge the 3 persons of the trinity diminishes the meaning and value of scriptures that speak of the intercessory work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit before the Father



# DENY 3 DISTINCT PERSONS?

The Atonement depends on 3 distinct persons in the Trinity

- The Father sends & the Son obeys
- The Spirit empowers the Son to arrive at the cross in righteousness
  - The Father judges the Son



“Let us make man in  
our image after our  
likeness...” Gen. 1:26

“Behold, the man has  
become like one of us,  
knowing good and  
evil...” Gen. 3:22

**HINTS IN THE  
OLD TESTAMENT**



“Come, let us go down  
there and confuse their  
language...”

Gen. 11:7



# HINTS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

“...Therefore, God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions...”

Ps. 45:7 (Quoted in Hebrews 1:8)



# HINTS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

“The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand..”

Ps 110:1



The most common and enduring heresy regarding God's nature is Arianism. Denies the deity of Jesus Christ. Jehovah's Witnesses hold this view of Jesus



# TRIUNITY REVEALED IN THE GOSPELS



“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God...”

Jn. 1:1-2



# SHARING WITH A J.W.

**Don't get bogged down with Jn 1:1, instead drop down to verse 3!**

All things came into being by Him [the Word] and apart from him nothing came into being that has come into being. Jn 1:3 NASB



# SHARING WITH A J.W.

**Don't get bogged down with Jn 1:1, instead drop down to verse 3!**

“All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence.” Jn 1:3 NWT



# SHARING WITH A J.W.

All things that ***NEVER***  
Came into Being

All things that came  
into being

**God**

**All Created  
Things**



# SHARING WITH A J.W.

All things that ***NEVER***  
Came into Being

All things that came  
into being

**God**

**All Created  
Things**



**All these things were  
created through Jesus**

Jn 1:3)



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# SHARING WITH A J.W.

All things that ***NEVER***  
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**God**

**All things  
came into being  
through him**



“apart from him (Jesus) not even one  
thing came into existence.” Jn 1:3 NWT



# SHARING WITH A J.W.

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# GOD IS ONE – N.T.

yet for us **there is one God**, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, **and one Lord, Jesus Christ**, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

1 Cor. 8:6



# GOD IS ONE – N.T.

And this is eternal life, that they know you, **the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.**

Jn 17:3



“...baptizing them in  
the **name** of the **Father**,  
the **Son** and the **Holy**  
**Spirit...**”

Matt. 28:18



Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long and you still do not know me, Philip? **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.**”

Jn. 14:8-9

## TRIUNITY REVEALED IN THE GOSPELS



And I will ask my Father, and he will give you **another** Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells within you and will be in you.

Jn. 14:16-17



**“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.”**

1 Cor. 12:4-6

TRINITY  
REVEALED IN  
THE EPISTLES



But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to **lie to the Holy Spirit** and to keep back *some* of the price of the land? While it remained *unsold*, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? **You have not lied to men but to God.**”

Or do you not know  
that your body is  
a temple of the Holy  
Spirit who is in you,  
whom you have  
from God, and that you  
are not your own?

1 Cor. 6:19

TRINITY  
REVEALED IN  
THE EPISTLES



# ARIANISM

## **Based on:**

**Colossians 1:15 - refers to Jesus as  
“first-born”**

**Passages referring to Jesus as  
“only-begotten” (Jn 1:4 and Jn  
3:16)**



# FIRST-BORN

The emphasis in Colossians 1:15 is not that Jesus was created. The word firstborn here means “first-born status” or “birthright”.



# FIRST-BORN

The NIV translates this as  
“firstborn *over* all  
creation...”



# FIRST-BORN

In Matthew 28, at the commissioning of the Apostles, Jesus declares to them that all authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Him.



# ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON

Greek word *monogenes*  
(mon-og-en-ace) used in  
Jn. 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 Jn  
4:19.



# ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON

It was believed that monogenes was a word from *mono* meaning “only” and *gennaō* meaning “bear” or “beget”



# ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON

Current language study has determined that monogenes is connected to the word *genos* meaning “class” or “kind”. “One-of-a-kind Son”



# HEBREWS 11:17



By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his **only** son,



At this council, Athanasius  
contended for the Deity of  
the Son.

*Homoousios v. Homoiousios*

*Homo = Same*

*Homoi = Similar*



We believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
Maker of all things  
visible and invisible.  
And in our Lord Jesus  
Christ, the Son of God,  
begotten of the Father,  
the only-begotten;



that is of the essence of  
the Father, God of God,  
Light of Light, True  
God of True God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance  
with the Father...



Contended for the  
personhood of the  
Holy Spirit.

...can be grieved

Eph. 4:30

...can be lied to

Acts 5:3-4

**COUNCIL AT  
CONSTANTINOPLE  
A.D. 381**

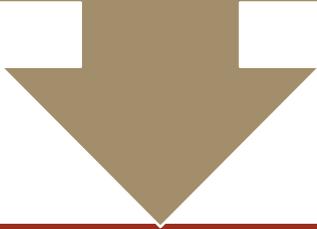


*And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.*

**COUNCIL AT  
CONSTANTINOPLE  
A.D. 381**



What are ways in which people try to describe or explain the Trinitarian nature of God? “The Trinity is like...”



What are the strengths and weaknesses of those descriptions?



# IT'S KIND OF LIKE...

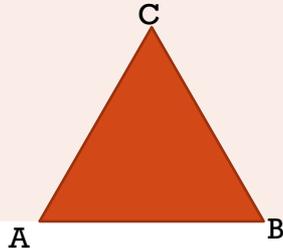
A man who is a  
Son, a Father and  
an Employee.

Except, He has  
one nature but  
**NOT** three  
distinct persons.



# IT'S KIND OF LIKE...

A Triangle



Except, “A” is  
not a triangle.  
This is a  
Tripartite view.



# IT'S KIND OF LIKE...

Water at different temperatures... solid, liquid, gas.

Except, water cannot have simultaneously the same nature and distinction. Is not in both states at the same time. This is Modalism.

