



Scriptures and Doctrine :: Questions about the Trinity

Questions about the Trinity, on: 2014/2/28 16:38

Saints can you please direct me to the verses in the New Testament that teach the Trinity. Also what is modalism? How does this view differ from the orthodox understanding of the Trinity? Also can one still be considered a Christian if they reject the Trinity and embrace a view called modalism?

Blaine

Re: The Trinity - posted by yuehan, on: 2014/2/28 16:47

CARM.ORG is a good resource. There have been good discussions on this forum too if you were to look up the archives

Personally, I like to focus on the deity of Christ (from which Trinitarian doctrine follows quite closely). I believe that's quite clear from the following verses:

- (i) Jesus laying claim to the divine title *ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ υἱος τοῦ θεοῦ* (John 8:58)
- (ii) Jesus' acceptance of worship (Matt 14:33, Matt 28:9, Matt 28:17, John 9:38) compare this with Matt 4:10, Deut 6:13)
- (iii) The ascribing of divine titles (e.g. *ὁ ἀρχαῖος* and the *ἄλφα καὶ ὁ ὰω*) compare Isaiah 44:6 with Revelation 1:17), divine attributes (e.g. eternal existence *ὁ ἀΐδιος* Micah 5:2 John 1:1) and divine offices (e.g. Creator - Hebrews 1:8-12, Colossians 1:16-17, John 1:1-3) to Jesus
- (iv) The baptism of Jesus (Matt 3:13-17, John 1:29-34) and baptismal formula (Matt 28:19)

Re: Questions about the Trinity - posted by DEADn (), on: 2014/2/28 16:48

William Branham was modalism. Essentially God is one Person acting in different roles like son, nephew, cousin but your name is (fill in the blank). In this cause God's name is Jesus or maybe Yahweh but He served in the roles of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They baptize in Jesus' Name because that is the name of God. They present the book of Acts in which everyone was baptized in Jesus' Name v. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I used to work around a guy who believed this stuff and actually went to his church one Sunday to see it for myself.

Re: Questions about the Trinity - posted by Lysa (), on: 2014/2/28 17:37

Blaine,

I used to work with a Jesus Only couple and one day we were talking and I found out that both had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. I was flabbergasted!

The Lord opened my eyes and I said to him, *Brother*, we can't be that far apart in theology if God gave you a Jesus only person and me a Trinitarian, both the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the gift of speaking in tongues, now can we?

It is something to think about, Blaine!!

God bless you,
Lisa

Re: Questions about the Trinity - posted by proudpapa, on: 2014/2/28 18:50

Hi bear

bear wrote : ///Saints can you please direct me to the verses in the New Testament that teach the Trinity. Also what is modalism?///

1 John 5:7

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Re: - posted by JB1968 (), on: 2014/2/28 22:05

Modalism and saying that God served in different roles presents a problem. The baptism of Jesus presents all three persons of the trinity, each separate and distinct, yet one God. Not each a part of God, but each co-eternal and distinct. If each were a part of God, then neither would be fully God. The early church hammered out the doctrine of the trinity with detailed language and logical conclusions based upon Scripture.

Re: Questions about the Trinity - posted by JB1968 (), on: 2014/2/28 22:09

Also can one still be considered a Christian if they reject the Trinity and embrace a view called modalism?

This is a departure from orthodox christianity and those groups who deny the trinity generally have been defined as a cult and false in teaching. However, God knows the heart.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2014/3/2 12:52

JB1968: "Also can one still be considered a Christian if they reject the Trinity and embrace a view called modalism?"

In John 7:17 - "If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority."

One way to look at this verse is that the more you seek to do God's will, the clearer it would become to you as to which doctrines are of Him and which are not.

So one might not necessarily start off with a clear understanding of Trinitarian doctrine, but doctrinal truths would become progressively clearer as he journeys on with God (like Keith Green, for example).

And God has indeed promised to lead us into ALL truth (John 16:13) :)

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2014/3/2 12:58

Quote:

"1 John 5:7

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

Even folks I know who are very partial to the KJV have to admit this is an extremely questionable translation of this verse. A quick google search will point to these problems.

II Corinthians 13:14 - posted by docs (), on: 2014/3/2 16:35

14 - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ - the Son

and the love of God - the Father

and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit - the Spirit

Re: Trinity - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2014/3/2 20:15

In the garden, Jesus' prayer was to be relieved of the ordeal of the cross. He was fully human, the pain of that suffering death was going to be real. He said, "Not my will but Thine be done," indicating that two wills were wrangling things out in the prayer session.

We so desperately want to see how the mechanics work out, to understand with our minds what our eyes are seeing, our hearts feeling. We are so like Philip, "Show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Our minds won't need any more information- "Ah, that's how it works! Let's go grab some lunch."

For me, love is the best proof of the trinity, though my mind cannot fathom the details. There simply had to be a trinity for God to have wanted a creation, to have wanted beings in His image to love and to love in return.

Had He been alone, He could not have even known anything of character, of beauty, of good and evil, of anticipating, of joy, of sorrow. All these and more flow from relationship, and He is the God who understands relationship! You will note that all the other gods created by man have one thing in common- they are tyrants who don't understand relationships!

The Bible doesn't really need to teach the nuts and bolts of the trinity, and since it is somewhat incomprehensible, it is just as well. But the trinity is evidenced by some of the scriptures mentioned, and the truth of it is woven into the greater themes of the Bible.

Just as Jesus is not a doctrine but a life giving real person, so also the Trinity is the substance of the God we serve.

Just trust Him.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2014/3/2 20:28

Quote:

-----TMK....1 John 5:7

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John 1:14...The "Word" became flesh "meaning the son I would guess" and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2014/3/3 4:21

Let me clarify that Modalism does not nullify the deity of Jesus unlike JW or Mormon. It believes that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are different models of same God. They do not believe the traditional view of trinity that God exists as 3 different persons.

When I came to Christ and confessed my faith, I was only enlightened by the Bible. I did not hear any theologian explain me the basic Christian theology. To me all the understanding came purely from what I read from Bible. I was having an idea of Trinity as God existing in 3 different forms which by some way can coexist. I did not find anything wrong with my understanding, I was at that time a born again Christian with all my sins forgiven. Until I met a brother who once questioned

ned my understanding on different Christian believes and told me that my understanding of Trinity was flawed. I from the m accepted the idea of 3 different persons existing in one God as trinity, as this answered the questions better than 3 for ms.

According to me Trinity is not explained clearly in Bible for some reason. God knows that we will not have wisdom to comprehend this. The understanding that God exists as 3 different person comes as a logical interpretation of scripture. It is not plainly stated in scripture that they exist as 3 different person and only when you believe this you will be saved. So to me as long as someone believes in the deity of Jesus, they can be saved.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2014/3/3 22:35

I think theologians have the knack of complicating scripture that when read as written would be easy to understand!

Consider Genesis 1:26: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'" 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Notice the plural pronouns: US, our.

Then he made two individuals that were described as two different individuals. And...they were made in the image of God.

What is so hard about this? If one understands this from the first chapter in the WORD it would make the rest so much more understandable.

This is the way I explain it: the realm of God is populated by three persons; the human realm is populated by billions - begun with Adam and Eve; the realm of angels is populated by myriads and myriads. Different realms of creatures made similar to God, all with different purposes to function in God's creation.

Simple.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2014/3/3 22:43

The Bible tells us that God is spirit, and that those who worship him must do so in spirit and in truth. I think some of our struggles to explain the trinity come from the fact that we really don't have a clear picture of what that means. Jesus is the only part of the Godhead that took upon himself the form of flesh and lived as a man. We know that in the trinity there is perfect unity or union. In that sense God is indeed one. Hear Israel that God is one is a true statement. And yet the son praying to the father in no way contradicts that truth that God is one. The son is in the father and the father in the son. And yet the two are unique as well, each one separate from the other. We cannot approach anything like this in human existence, although a healthy marriage might approach being an analogy. So, we sometimes have trouble picturing and explaining it.

I agree that modalism does not equate with heresy, but it's just a poor understanding of what scripture tells us. There are many truly born again, spirit filled people who are "oneness".

Re: , on: 2014/3/5 9:34

I would like to thank those who have posted on this thread. Your posts have been very edifying.

Blaine

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/3/5 12:16

Hey Blaine,

My favorite "proof text" for the Trinity, against the modalism heresy, comes from Jesus conversation with the Pharisees in John 8:12-20.

Quote:

12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life. 13 So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true." 14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. 15 You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. 16 But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me. 17 Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. 18 I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me." 19 So they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also." 20 These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.

In Jesus conversation with the Pharisees, they tell Jesus that his testimony is false, because he is testifying about himself. Jesus reply to them is telling. First, he says in verse 14 that his testimony is true because he knows where he came from, but even if his personal experience wasn't enough for them, he says in v 18 "My judgment is true, for I am not alone in it." Then he appeals to the Law of Moses which says "that the testimony of two is true." (v 17) Then he says in v 18 "I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

It is evident to me from this text that to prove the authenticity of his testimony, Jesus appeals to the law which says the testimony of "two" is true. Two what? Two people. Therefore, Jesus says His testimony is true because He testifies about Himself, and He is "not alone" in this testimony, because the Father also testifies on behalf of Christ.

This account is enough, in my mind, to show that the Father and Son are two distinct persons, co-existing in time separately from one another. If Jesus and the Father were the exact same person, and not co-existing, and God sometimes wears the mask of Father and sometimes wears the mask of Son, then Jesus could not appeal to two distinct testimonies as demanded by the law of Moses in order to win his argument with the Pharisees.

While I am sympathetic to people who hold modalistic views of the Trinity outrightly, having personally done so in my younger Christian days, I believe those who hold such an opinion are in gross error, and whose viewpoint will ultimately harm if not outright destroy their relationship with God.

I would be careful of pronouncing everybody who holds such a view as damned, but as one theologian I once read said something to this effect:

Our knowledge and understanding of the Trinity is not merely abstract head knowledge, but is a real relationship issue. If God is in fact a trinity, how can somebody be in a relationship with each member of the godhead and not know it?

I would say I subscribe to such a thought. While there is much room for grace and for growth, if a person holds a prolonged and dogmatic modalistic view, I would say their relationship with the Lord has long been fractured.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/3/5 12:33

Another thought regarding the Trinity and what it teaches us, not only about God, but how we love one another in community. If the Trinity is not true, then God cannot be love. For if God by his nature is "love", he must by nature be a relational being who directs His affections outwardly to somebody or something else.

However, in the case of modalism, God is all alone, with nobody to love. Therefore, since God existed by Himself with nobody to love, He would've been forced to create the universe and all of mankind in order to find somebody to love. And if this is the case, then God is not self-sufficient, and has needs, is inadequate in and of himself, and thus, His only reason for creation was to fulfill His need to love and be loved.

In the Trinity however, God has co-existed for all eternity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As some theologians have not

ed: "God is a community engaged in a perpetual dance," freely expressing love from each member to each member. Creation then becomes a loving exercise that God embarked on out of mere joy and out of the mere will to do so. It is not something He did to satisfy his being alone with nobody to love.

Imagine now you are a Christian trying to understand love and how to love your neighbor. So you turn to the Bible to find out how God loves. Which model do you think would be the most healthy spiritually, to flesh out in your own life?

My answer: The Trinity. Modalism offers a perverted view of God that will eventually teach you a perverted form of love

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2014/3/5 13:07

We all have to remember as Christians, these threads might get us to reading our Bible more, "which is good" but personally I just feel they can be distractions at times, and can cause separation. There is so much going on in this world right now, we all have lots bigger fish to fry, I personally feel, God, Revival and Prayer is our only hope, let's not get so distracted by trying to get everyone on the same page, we forget our "real" priorities.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4:12... Allow for differences, as this does not take away your salvation. There are many others but ALWAYS BE HUMBLE AND PUT CHRIST FIRST in everything you do! Doctrinal differences are minor. Learn to allow others a different viewpoint. We all grow at different levels in grace and knowledge, so allow for this with mercy and love.

Are we lights? Do we express God's love? Are we Ambassadors for Christ? Ministers of Reconciliation? Bridge builders? Prayer warriors? Repairers of the breach? Peace makers? Meek? Humble? Is Christ central to everything we do? Let's glorify God together. Let's have the same mind as Christ. Let's love one another. By this shall all men know we are His disciples!

Re: Good Book to Read - posted by hulseys (), on: 2014/3/5 14:24

http://www.amazon.com/The-Trinity-Evidence-And-Issues/dp/0529106922/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1394047304&sr=8-1&keywords=Trinity+evidence+and+issues

The Trinity Evidence and Issues is probably the best book on the market for this subject. It is an exhaustive study of the trinity in the Bible. The link above will take you to the page in Amazon where you can purchase it.

Re: Questions about the Trinity - posted by Elibeth, on: 2014/3/9 23:01

Dear bro.Bear,
The Trinity,..
I believe in the Trinity.

First of all,Is it important that we believe in The Jesus that Paul preached?And who is this Jesus that Paul preached?

Please look to each of Paul's letters to the churches,..look to his introductions at the start of each Epistle.(I will not be able to go to them all and point them out,but we can each search that out.Please search ,and then ask, Why would Paul,always order his words,..God..The Father,..and note the"AND" word,....and His Son Jesus Christ....And why would Jesus always speak of "His Father,...God",...? Many,many,many times we see this,and yet,Why would we try to say differently than they?

(and Please know,that I am not rebuking no one),but am just posing these questions to each of us.

God is Spirit,..He is invisible,...He is Spirit/Word,...He who Speaketh,...
Breath,...He is everywhere....Lord above all Lords. (When He said, Let "US"make man in "OUR" own image,...I believe He was speaking of

The Spirit/ Word.(Us/Our).

And,I know that there are some in our world,that are "Jesus only",...
But is this The Jesus that Paul preached?...or is this "Another Jesus"?

.....
Lk.1:35,...The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee,And the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called The Son of God.

I believe,The Spirit/Word of God,..was deposited into Mary's womb by
" Jesus' Father God.....God is Spirit,..and His Spirit is everywhere.(Paul told those people that talking about "The unknown god",if they would just feel for Him,they could find Him?

Jesus only spoke His Fathers Words,...complete obedience,He also said, I and The Father are one,and went on to say,' make them one,as we are one'
...The Spirit / Word, makes us one.Not only one,but the unity.

Grace,Peace,and blessings,
elizabeth

Re: Questions about the Trinity - posted by psalm1, on: 2014/3/16 16:07

We know they are all three referred to as "He"

Here are two references that destroy any possibility of the Godhead being anything but separate "persons"

Heb 1
2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,

Rev 5
7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof

(a Person,holding a book.....a Person taking it from his hand)

Re: , on: 2014/3/16 19:08

Rom_15:30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive to gether with me in your prayers to God for me;

Eph_1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

Heb_9:14 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?

1Pe_1:2 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 unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

1Pe_3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1Pe_4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

1Jn_4:2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

1Jn_4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.