

# Is the Godhead a Trinity of Three Equal Persons?

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Mainstream belief generally teaches that God is three equal persons in one - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This belief is not supported by Bible scripture. Not only is the Holy Spirit not a separate prescient being, but the Father and the Son are not equal. The godhead consists of only God the Father and God the Son, and there is a loving Father-Son relationship (Heb 1:5, John 1:14; 3:16; 17:24, Mark 1:9-11). The Holy Spirit is a helping, teaching, and comforting power (Rom 8:26, John 14:26, Acts 1:8); and it emanates from the Father (John 14:15-17; 15:26, Matt 10:20).

The principal scripture cited by those espousing a trinity is 1 John 5:7-8. But this scripture, as commonly published, contains additional language spuriously added in the 14th century. This is well known to Bible scholars, and study Bibles usually contain footnotes or references pointing out that the added language did not appear in early Greek manuscripts used for translation. Omitting the added words, 1 John 5:7-8 simply reads, "For there are three that bear witness: the spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one."

John Chapter 1, which describes the godhead, makes no mention of a Holy Spirit being. This is not an oversight. The Holy Spirit is not a separate being. If it were, then one might have to conclude after reading Luke 1:35, that the Holy Spirit is Christ's father, not the Father who Jesus always addressed in prayer (Matt. 11:25-26; 26:39-42, Mark 14:26, Luke 10:21, 22:42, 23:34, 36, 23:46, John 11:41; 12:27-28, 14:16, 17:1, 5, 11, 21, 24-25). Hebrews Chapter 1 and Colossians Chapter 1 also contain language related to the godhead, especially Christ's role.

The beginning of Jesus' human journey as a baby took place by the working of the power of the Holy Spirit – the Father's spirit (John 1:14). Jesus' spirit was placed in Mary's womb. Christ was pre-existent, and was willing to be emptied of His divinity and power to live as a human being (Phil 2:5-7, John 6:62; 13:3; 17:5). Jesus' relationship was and is as a Son to His Father (Matt 11:27, Heb 1:1-5).

The members of the godhead are not equal. If they were, they might have had to flip a coin to determine who would go and live as Jesus Christ. But Christ stated that the Father is greater than the Son (John 14:28). This is supported by the fact that the Father grants authority to the Son (John 5:26-27); that the Father sent the Son to do the Father's will (John 5:30, 6:38; 20:21); and that Jesus did not speak His own words, but the words of the Father who sent Him (John 14:24). We see that after Christ returns to the earth and performs all of His work and duties, including preparation for the arrival of His Father and the New Jerusalem, He then turns the Kingdom over to the Father, and is subject to the Father (1 Cor 15:24-28).

The Holy Spirit is a gift of understanding and power from the Father which begets Christians as children of God (Rom 8:19). The physical body of the Christian is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19-20). Those with the Holy Spirit are assured salvation (Eph 1:13; 4:30). Each can one day expect to be born again as a spirit being with eternal life (John 3:5-8, 16).

In scripture, the Holy Spirit is sometimes referred to as "it," and sometimes as "he." The reason for this owes to the translation of the Greek pronouns "autos" and "ekeinos." These are reflexive pronouns which might mean he, she, they, them, or it, depending upon the context and the gender of the noun to which they refer. In Greek, some words are male, some female, and some neuter. This is common in many languages, but not in English. So depending on the word, autos or ekeinos will reflect the gender of the word, or lack of gender.

The Greek word for spirit is a neuter word, and so very often the Holy Spirit is referenced as "it." However, the Greek word translated comforter, used to refer to the Holy Spirit, is a male word, and is then referenced as "he". So it is important for us not to take the pronouns used for the Holy Spirit as literal indications of gender in the English language. We must separately determine the nature of the

Holy Spirit. Since it comes from the Father, it is in that sense a "he." But since it is not a separate prescient being, it is in that sense an "it." Had the Greek words for either spirit or comforter been female, the Holy Spirit would have been referenced as "she," which no doubt would have sparked some doctrinal arguments among the unscholarly.

Understanding that the Holy Spirit comes from the Father, and that it is a spiritual gift of help, allows one to know that the Holy Spirit is an 'it', not a separate prescient being. It is true that some scriptures tend to personify the spirit, but this does not mean that it is a separate being. In Proverbs chapters 8 and 9, wisdom is personified as a woman, but that does not make wisdom a real being. Such personifications are just part of the many elegant literary qualities of the Bible. When we study all scriptures concerning the Holy Spirit, we understand it's nature as a force emanating from the Father, not a separate personage of the godhead.

By understanding that the Holy Spirit is the Father's spirit, we can better understand Matthew 12:31-32, in which Jesus declares, "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come." While Jesus was and is the Son of God, while on earth He often humbly referred to Himself (as in this scripture) as the Son of Man, reflecting His human condition. The reason it is worse to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit than against Jesus is because the Holy Spirit is the Father's spirit. Jesus rightly holds his Father higher above all, including Himself.

The Bible is the written word of God, inspired and made available to we who are the focus of God's creation. We should expect that God would reveal His loving nature. And if one studies the Bible without preconception, the nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is evident. The concept of a trinity of three equal persons forming the godhead is not supported by scripture. That concept has pagan roots, as do several other major doctrines found in prevailing Christianity.

If God really was a single entity or being, manifested as three separate beings, some questions and concerns should come to mind. For example, when Jesus prayed to the Father, He would have actually been praying to Himself. Why would that have been necessary, if each is just a part of the same being/entity? When a human being displays more than one appearance or multiple personalities, it is considered to be a mental disorder. But God has no such disorder.

The godhead consists of two unequal personages - the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the Father, sent as a gift to help and instruct individuals who are walking the path of salvation. Identifying the personages of the godhead and the nature of the Holy Spirit is only a starting point. The character of God, to which we should aspire, is also reflected in the scriptures. The Father and the Son are in harmony - selfless, visionary, determined, and loving - working together for our salvation, not willing that any should be lost (2 Pet 3:9).

May we each one day achieve spiritual harmony with the God who said, "Let us create man in our image, after our likeness..." (Gen 1:26, Eph 4:20-24). God intends to have many spirit-born children in His family (Heb 2:10, 1 Cor 15:20-23).

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