

# THE TRINITY: How Greek Philosophy Corrupted the Biblical Godhead

## I. BIBLICAL EVIDENCE: THREE SEPARATE BEINGS

### 1. Jesus's Baptism (Matt 3:16-17)

"When Jesus was baptized... **the Spirit of God descended like a dove... and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son."**

→ **Three distinct beings, three locations, one moment. How can one being be in three places?**

### 2. Stephen's Vision (Acts 7:55-56)

"But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God... 'I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.'"

→ **Two separate beings. Can God stand at His own right hand?**

### 3. Jesus Prays to the Father (John 17:1, 5)

"Jesus looked toward heaven and **prayed: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son... And now, Father, glorify me in your presence.'**"

→ **Can God pray to Himself? Does one being converse with himself?**

### 4. "The Father Is Greater Than I" (John 14:28)

"You heard me say... 'I am going to the Father, **for the Father is greater than I.**'"

- "The Son can do nothing by himself" (John 5:19)
- "I seek not to please myself but him who sent me" (John 5:30)
- "I have come... not to do my will but... the will of him who sent me" (John 6:38)

→ **Clear subordination. If co-equal, how can the Father be "greater"?**

### 5. "The Only True God" (John 17:3)

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

→ **Jesus calls the Father "the only true God"—not "we, the only true God."**

### 6. "One God, the Father" (1 Cor 8:6)

"Yet for us **there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came... and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came.**"

→ **Clear distinction: one God = Father. One Lord = Jesus. Not "one God = Trinity."**

### 7. Separate Wills (Matt 26:39)

"He fell with his face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. **Yet not as I will, but as you will.**'"

→ **Two wills, not one. How can one being have conflicting wills?**

### 8. Separate Knowledge (Mark 13:32)

"But about that day or hour no one knows... **nor the Son, but only the Father.**"

→ **Father knows what the Son doesn't. If same essence, how is this possible?**

## II. THE TRINITY IS NOT IN THE BIBLE

**FACT:** The word "Trinity" appears **nowhere** in Scripture.  
**FACT:** "Three persons in one substance" appears **nowhere** in Scripture.  
**FACT:** "Homousios" (same substance) appears **nowhere** in Scripture.  
**Challenge:** Show me ONE verse that clearly teaches "three persons, one essence."

**What Trinitarians Do:** Gather verses mentioning Father, Son, Holy Spirit, then impose Trinity framework onto them. Example: Matt 28:19 mentions all three—but says nothing about "one substance" or "co-equal."

## III. HOW GREEK PHILOSOPHY CORRUPTED CHRISTIANITY

### Timeline of Corruption

- **30-100 AD:** Jesus & apostles — No Trinity
- **100-300 AD:** Early Fathers — Widespread subordinationism (Jesus lesser than Father)
- **325 AD:** Council of Nicaea — "Homousios" (same substance) declared
- **381 AD:** Council of Constantinople — Trinity finalized: three persons, one essence

**Key Question:** If Trinity is essential, why did it take 300+ years to develop?

### Greek Philosophical Sources

- 1. **Plato/Middle Platonism:** Eternal, unchanging "Forms"; immaterial God

→ *Stanford Encyclopedia: "Platonist thinking touched the majority of Christian writers most in key doctrinal development."*

**2. Aristotle's Categories:** Ousia (essence/substance) vs. Hypostasis (person/subsistence)

→ "Gregory of Nyssa was substantially influenced by Aristotle's Categories in his development of the Trinity doctrine."

**3. Stoic Logos:** Divine reason ordering the cosmos

→ "The Stoic concept of Logos became the essential parallel for the Christian understanding of the Son of God."

**4. Tertullian (c. 200 AD):** Coined "una substantia, tres personae" (one substance, three persons)

→ "Persona" meant theatrical mask, not "person" in modern sense. Later misunderstood.

**5. Cappadocian Fathers (375-390 AD):** Formulated "three hypostases in one ousia"

→ "Mainly under influence of the Cappadocians that 'three hypostases in one ousia' became accepted orthodox doctrine."

## IV. EARLY CHRISTIANS REJECTED THE TRINITY

### Scholarly Consensus:

"There is **no theologian in the Eastern or Western Church before the Arian Controversy who does not in some sense regard the Son as subordinate to the Father.**" (R.P.C. Hanson)

"Before Nicaea, Christian theology was **almost universally subordinationist.**" (Robert M. Grant)

### Examples:

- **Justin Martyr (c. 100-165):** Called Jesus a "second God" and an "angel"
- **Origen (c. 184-253):** "The Father is greater than the Son, for he is unbegotten; the Son is less than the Father because he is begotten."
- **Irenaeus, Tertullian:** Both held subordinationist views

**What Changed:** Nicaea (325) **condemned** subordinationism and forced "homousios" doctrine — a radical departure from earlier teaching.

## V. LOGICAL INCOHERENCE OF THE TRINITY

### Violates Law of Non-Contradiction

### Trinity Claims:

- God is ONE being
- God is THREE persons
- Each person is fully God
- There are not three Gods, but one God

→ **If Father, Son, Holy Spirit are each fully God, you have THREE GODS, not one.**

**Response:** "One in essence, three in persons."

**Rebuttal:** Word game. If each is fully God, you have three Gods.

### Contradictory Attributes

- Father is unbegotten; Son is begotten → Contradiction
- Father begets; Son is begotten → Contradiction
- Father sends; Son is sent → Contradiction

**"Mystery" Is Not an Answer:** A mystery is coherent but not fully understood. The Trinity is a *contradiction*, not a mystery.

## VI. THE LDS SOLUTION: BIBLICAL GODHEAD RESTORED

### Joseph Smith's First Vision (1820)

"I saw **two Personages**, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. **One of them spake unto me... and said, pointing to the other — "This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!"**" (JS-H 1:17)

**What This Reveals:** Two separate beings with physical bodies.

### LDS Doctrine of the Godhead

- 1. **Three Separate Beings:**

"The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit." (D&C 130:22)

## 2. United in Purpose:

"Although the members of the Godhead are distinct beings with distinct roles, they are **one in purpose and doctrine.**" (Gospel Topics, "Godhead")

## Biblical Support for LDS Understanding

### Image of God (Gen 1:26-27):

"Let us make mankind in our **image**... So God created mankind in his own image."

→ Humans have physical bodies. If we're in God's image, God has a physical body.

### Moses Saw God (Ex 33:11):

"The Lord would speak to Moses **face to face**, as one speaks to a friend."

### Unity in Purpose, Not Substance (John 17:20-23):

"That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you... **that they may be one as we are one.**"

→ **Are disciples supposed to become one being? No. Unity = purpose and love, not substance.**

## VII. ANSWERING TRINITARIAN OBJECTIONS

### Obj 1: "Only one God" (Deut 6:4)

→ "Echad" (one) = unified one (Gen 2:24: husband/wife "one flesh")  
→ 1 Cor 8:6: "One God, **the Father**" (not Trinity)  
→ LDS affirms one Godhead: three beings, one purpose

### Obj 2: "Jesus is called God" (John 1:1, 20:28)

→ "God" (theos/elohim) used for angels, judges (Ps 82:6, John 10:34-35)  
→ Jesus is divine but subordinate (John 14:28, 20:17, 1 Cor 11:3)

### Obj 3: "John 1:1 says 'the Word was God'"

→ "Was WITH God" = distinct person  
→ Greek "theos" (no article) = "divine" or "a god" (Moffatt, Goodspeed)

### Obj 4: "Isaiah 9:6 calls Jesus 'Mighty God, Everlasting Father'"

→ "El Gibbor" (Mighty God) ≠ "El Shaddai" (God Almighty)  
→ "Avi-ad" (Everlasting Father) = Father of Eternity, eternal protector

## VIII. THE BOTTOM LINE

### The Trinity Is:

- × Not found in the Bible
- × Created 300 years after Christ by councils
- × Based on Greek philosophy (Plato, Aristotle, Stoics)
- × Contradicts Scripture (separate beings, subordination, separate wills)
- × Logically incoherent (one being = three beings)

### The LDS Restoration:

- ✓ Three separate beings (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)
- ✓ Physical bodies (Father & Son: flesh and bone; Holy Ghost: spirit)
- ✓ United in purpose, will, and love
- ✓ Consistent with ALL biblical passages
- ✓ Logically coherent
- ✓ Revealed through Joseph Smith's First Vision

**The Choice:** Accept the Trinity because councils commanded it, or accept the biblical truth Joseph Smith restored?

**Sources:** *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Trinity history), R.P.C. Hanson (Arian Controversy), Britannica (Nicaea), Wikipedia (Subordinationism, Cappadocian Fathers), United Church of God (Greek Philosophy), LDS sources (D&C 130:22, JS-H 1:17, Gospel Topics)*