

understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11:2); he inspires Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16).

The texts showing the wisdom, glory, and power of each of the three persons in the Godhead could be multiplied. The doctrine of the Trinity is based upon such Scripture texts quoted and many others. Christ Jesus, though he had the Holy Spirit dwelling in him, lifted up his eyes toward heaven when he prayed. He did not pray to the Spirit in him or to himself, but to the Father above. He testified that his Father was greater than he; but we are not to stretch that statement beyond its proper meaning.

Paul explains this matter of the Son's inferiority to the Father and refers it to a *particular time*, namely, during the incarnation. “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2: 5-8). There is no proof of Christ's inferiority at any other time, either before or after the incarnation.

“For in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities — all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together” (Col. 1:16-17).

After his resurrection he again assumed his place of divine honor and glory in the Godhead. “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (Phil. 2:9-10). “Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made” (John 17:5).

Christ did the will of his Father. He was sent by God into the world. But with respect to power, Jesus said, And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt. 28:18). If “all power,” then *almighty* power. He possessed *creative* power — “all things were created through him and for him” (Col. 1:16). The Spirit was and is sent forth definitely, directly, purposely, and instantaneously; hence, he is a personality. The Holy Spirit had a definite *time*, *object*, and *purpose*, and is not a mere uncontrollable influence floating about in the air like the fragrance of flowers or some ethereal substance which happened to come in contact with the Lord by chance at the time of his baptism.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three persons. They are in unity as to eternal existence, power, plan, purpose, constituting one “Godhead.”

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Pamphlet 176

## **Jehovah's Witnesses and the Holy Trinity**

The word *trias* (of which the Latin *trinitas* is a translation) is first found in Theophilus of Antioch about A.D. 180. He speaks of “the Trinity of God [the Father], His Word and His Wisdom” (*Ad. Autol.*, 2-15). The term may, of course, have been in use before his time.

The Trinity is the term employed to signify the central doctrine of the Christian religion — the truth that in the unity of the Godhead there are Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, these three Persons being truly distinct one from another.

The Holy Bible clearly teaches that from time immemorial God is three persons equal in majesty, glory, and power.

First we have the declaration that “the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). Here the “Spirit of God” is not to be identified with the person of God the Father. Next, we note that when God was about to make man, He said, “Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness” (Gen. 1:26). After man had sinned, God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of *us*, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:22). Again, when man began to build a tower whose top was to reach heaven, God said, “Come, let *us* go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech” (Gen. 11:6-7).

The plural pronoun “*us*” implies more than one; and each of them were concerned in the creation and welfare of men. “Let *us* make man”; “Behold the man has become like one of *us*” *etc.* In every instance the speaker is God, Triune and One; existing in absolute unity.

Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses, denied the idea of the personality or personhood of the Holy Spirit teaching the Holy Spirit is merely a blind and unintelligible influence emanating from “Jehovah”

God. His teaching concerning Christ was also perverted.

Are there three distinct divine persons — infinite beings — possessing glory, majesty, wisdom, and power? Here is one testimony: “And Jesus came and said to them... Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:18-19). Here three persons are named — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — each occupying a place of divine authority and recognition in the work of salvation.

Following is Charles Taze Russell’s misleading statement concerning the Trinity. On page 59 of Series V, *Studies in the Scriptures*, we find, “The doctrine of the Trinity holds that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit *“are one in person, equal in glory and in power,”* as stated in the Church creeds.”

Obviously, the above description is inaccurate, as The Athanasian Creed (attributed to St. Anthonasius 296-372) demonstrates. This creed is a Profession of faith dating from the late fourth century, and is precise:

“Whoever wishes to be saved, needs above all to hold the Catholic faith; unless each one preserves this whole and inviolate, he will without a doubt perish in eternity. But the Catholic faith is this, that we venerate one God in the Trinity, and the Trinity in oneness; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance; for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, (and) another of the Holy Spirit; but the divine nature of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is one, their glory is equal, their majesty is coeternal.”

Russell, as I have shown from a direct quotation, denies the doctrine of the Trinity, which holds that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are *three divine persons in one God*. Scripture stands in direct contradiction to Russell’s theological view.

From *Studies in the Scriptures*, Series V. p210, I quote:

“But nothing in connection with this narrative in any sense of the word necessitates the thought of a personal Holy Spirit, separate from the Father and the Son. — The holy Spirit is not a person, but an influence, a power exerted by a person.”

“Nothing connected with this reference to the holy Spirit as another comforter or helper or strengthener implies that another God is meant or another person of a trinity of Gods” —p. 204.

In another place he bases an argument favoring his theory on the fact that the word “trinity” is not found in Scripture.

While it is true that in Scripture there is no single term by which the three divine persons are denoted together, all three persons are mentioned in a way that supplies a definite basis for the use of the word “trinity” in Christian teaching. “The Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:18-19). Disciples were baptized into the name of these three persons. All three of these possessed creative power.

First, God the Father: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).

Second, the Holy Spirit: “the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). “The Spirit of God has made me” (Job 33:4).

Third, Christ: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (Jn. 1:1). “He was in the world, and the world was made through him” (Christ) (Gen. 1:10). “For in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities — all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church” (Col. 1:16, 18). “Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of the Lord which he obtained with the blood of his own” (Acts 20:28). Then Christ, the Redeemer, is God. The Holy Spirit possesses all the divine attributes personally, hence he is God.

The three are mentioned as sharing equally and jointly in executing the plan of salvation. “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (Heb. 9:14). Here we have “Christ,” the “Spirit,” and “God.” Christ offered himself through the eternal Spirit to God. It would be ridiculous to say that Christ offered himself to himself, as to say that he offered himself through the Spirit to that Spirit. But the thought here is that the Holy Spirit is eternal. It is clear that the Spirit mentioned is not God the Father, for it is through this Spirit that Jesus offered himself.

The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus at the instance of his baptism and *a voice from heaven* said, “This is my beloved Son.” It was not, therefore, the voice from the Spirit, but from the Father. Again, on the Mount of Transfiguration (remember that Jesus had the Holy Spirit dwelling within him) a voice from *heaven* said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:17).

Russell taught that the Holy Spirit is not a person — that He is only a holy influence proceeding from The Father and the Son. We see, however, that the Holy Spirit, came to Jesus and anointed him with power; and the inspired Word tells us that God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power (Acts 10:38). Russell taught that the Holy Spirit is “influence” or “power” emanating from God. Then all the “anointing” Jesus received was an undefined, unintelligible something, sent out from the Father upon him, called the Holy Spirit.

If the Holy Spirit were an unintelligible or blind influence it would by necessity fill all space, and would be as uncontrollable as ether or the breath of flowers. But the Spirit is “eternal” (Heb. 9: 14); “For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God” (1 Cor. 2:10); the author of the new birth in the Spirit (John 3: 5-8); “And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and