**Appendix 6. Jesus is the Son of God, Not God the Son**

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**Introduction**

The Bible teaches that there is one God, the Father, and one Messiah and Lord, Jesus Christ, who is the divinely conceived Son of God. Those are very important truths, and this appendix will give evidence that supports them. In doing so, this appendix will also show that Jesus Christ is the fully human “Son of God,” and not “God the Son,” and thus it will also give evidence that shows that the Bible does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity.

For clarity’s sake, it is helpful to understand what the Trinity is. The orthodox doctrine of the Trinity (i.e., the generally accepted doctrine) is that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the “Holy Spirit” is God, and the three of them are co-equal, co-eternal, and share the same essence, and that together those three individual “Persons” are one triune God; also, Jesus is both 100% God and 100% man, and both Jesus’ divine nature and his human nature live together in his flesh body. The doctrine of the Trinity, though widely believed, is never stated in the Bible.

In contrast to belief in the Trinity, Biblical Unitarians believe that there is only one God—the Father. The Father had a Son, conceived and born about 2,000 years ago; he is the begotten Son of God and we know him as Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is fully human, like the rest of humankind. We do not present this appendix to antagonize or attack anyone, but rather because we believe an honest and rigorous examination of the biblical evidence will support that the Father alone is God and Jesus is His created Son. Furthermore, we think it is important for Christians to know the truth about God, Jesus, and the holy spirit.

[To more fully understand the holy spirit, see Appendix 7: “What is the Holy Spirit?”]

There is value in truth, and God and Jesus deserve to be known for who they really are. There is one God, the Father. He is not triune and thus He does not share His identity with two other “Persons.” That the Father alone is God elevates Him to His rightful position as the one God of the Bible, the Creator of the universe, and the One whom we love with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Similarly, knowing that the Lord Jesus is who Peter said he was, “a man approved of God” (Acts 2:22 KJV), elevates him to his rightful position. He is the only begotten Son of God, who loved so much that he lived a sinless, obedient life and died on the cross for us. God raised him from the dead and he now stands at God’s right hand as God’s second in command, administering the things of God.

Something that is openly admitted by theologians but not known by many Christians is that the doctrine of the Trinity is not stated in the Bible. It is “built” by piecing together statements that are said to support it. But since most Christians believe that the Trinity is a mystery and no one can understand it, doctrinal discussions about it are often avoided or brushed aside and ignored. Worse, the teaching that the Trinity is a “mystery” has been used as a club to beat down doubters and dissenters, and those doubters are often branded as “heretics” and their role in Christianity minimized (the idea the Trinity is a mystery is covered in section 20 below).

Thus, the Trinity stands as an unchallengeable but never-understood fortress in the center of Christianity. But Christians should get their doctrine from the Bible. What if a careful examination of the Bible showed that there was no Trinity? What if careful study showed that Yahweh was the one God of the Bible, and Jesus was who Peter said he was, “a man approved of God” and not a “God-man”? What if the “mystery” of the Trinity was not a mystery at all, but an erroneous doctrine that was formulated over time? This study will show that Jesus was indeed a fully human man approved by God.

This short appendix can only summarize some of the major points about who God and Jesus Christ really are. For further study, a bibliography of some of the books on the subject is included at the end of this appendix. Also, it is not the intention of this appendix to explain the verses that are traditionally used to support the doctrine of the Trinity, such as John 10:30 or John 8:58. Each of those verses can be understood in a way that supports the Biblical Unitarian position, and they are covered in the commentary on those individual verses.

**1) Basic Problems with the Doctrine of the Trinity**

The word “Trinity” is not in the Bible. Although that does not rule out the possible existence of the Trinity, it is supporting evidence that the doctrine is unbiblical.

Trinitarians differ, sometimes greatly, in their definitions of the Trinity. The Eastern Orthodox Church differs from the Western Church on the relation of the “Holy Spirit” to the Father and the Son. Also, Trinitarians who hold to the “classic” definition of the Trinity, that Jesus was 100% God and 100% man while on earth, believe differently from Kenotic Trinitarians, who believe that Jesus set aside his godhood while he was a man on earth. Oneness Pentecostals say the classic formula of the Trinity is completely wrong. Yet all these claim that Christ is God and that the Bible supports their position.

A study of the history of the Christian Church shows a definite development in the doctrine of the Trinity over the centuries. For example, the early form of the Apostles’ Creed, believed to date back to shortly after the time of the apostles themselves, does not mention the Trinity or the dual nature of Christ. Furthermore, it only states, “I believe in ‘the holy spirit,’” which could just as easily refer to the gift of holy spirit as it could to a third “Person” in the Trinity. The Nicene Creed, written in AD 325 and modified later, added the material about Jesus Christ being “eternally begotten” and “true God,” and about the Holy Spirit being “Lord.” But it was the Athanasian Creed, most likely composed in the late 400s or early 500s AD, that was the first creed to explicitly state the doctrine of the Trinity, and it includes that if a person does not believe it, he is not saved but will perish everlastingly. Yet saying that a person who does not believe in the Trinity is not saved contradicts the Bible. For example, when Peter addressed the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, he did not mention the Trinity or that Jesus was God in the flesh, yet about 3,000 people in the audience were saved (Acts 2:41).

One of the most convincing arguments for Biblical Unitarianism is that God is never described as being composed of “three.” Not “three,” “three-in-one,” “Father, Son and Holy Spirit,” or three Persons making up one God. Many Trinitarians point to Matthew 28:19 which lists the Father, Son, and holy spirit, but it does not call the three of them “God.” Matthew 28:19 is not defining God, it is stating the authority by which disciples will baptize: by the authority of God, of Christ, and by the power of the holy spirit. Simply mentioning three things together does not make them “God.” For example, if Matthew 28:19 read, “Baptize them in the ‘name’ (i.e., authority) of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” that would not make those three people “one Person.”

Also, the two natures of Jesus (him being fully God and fully man) are completely absent from the Scriptures. Jesus is never said to have two natures, two personalities, two minds, or two spirits within him. He is always viewed as one person with one mind.

Trinitarians say the “Threeness” of the Trinity is just as vital as his Oneness, but never once does the Bible mention God’s “Threeness,” whereas it mentions His Oneness many times (e.g., Deut. 4:35; 6:4; Isa. 44:6, 8; John 5:44; 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:6).

* There are no verses that define God as being Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
* There are no verses that define God as three, three in one, or a multiple.
* There are no verses that say that Jesus has two natures or two minds.
* There are no verses that say Jesus is a God-man, or that he is fully God and fully man.
* There are no verses that call Jesus “eternally begotten;” the bible says he was begotten or “born” by Mary

It seems that if the doctrine of the Trinity was genuine and central to Christian belief as almost all Trinitarians claim, and especially if belief in it was necessary for salvation as many Trinitarians teach, it would have been clearly stated in the Bible and in the earliest Christian creeds. The Trinity is not “hidden,” and it is not a “mystery,” it simply isn’t there.

**2) There is no Trinity in the Old Testament**

God gave the Scriptures to the Jewish people, and the Jewish religion and worship that comes from that revelation do not contain any reference to, or teachings about, a triune God. Since God gave the Old Testament to the Jews, surely they were qualified to read and understand it, but they never saw the doctrine of the Trinity in it; in fact, quite the opposite. Throughout their history, the Jews fiercely defended the fact that there was only one God.

Jesus himself tied the greatest commandment in the Law together with there being only one God. An expert in Old Testament law asked Jesus which of the commandments was the most important one. Jesus said to him, “The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God….” (Mark 12:29-30 KJV). The Jewish scholar, in accordance with the teachings of the Rabbis and the revelation and practices given to the Jews, would have believed that Yahweh was the only true God. But Jesus never corrected him or tried to modify his beliefs, he simply reinforced what this man already believed—that only Yahweh was God.

Furthermore, the pronouns in the Bible that refer to “God” are singular, and there are lots of them. “The Hebrew Bible and the New Testament contain well over twenty thousand pronouns and verbs describing the One God” (Anthony Buzzard and Charles Hunting, *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Christianity’s Self-inflicted Wound*, International Scholars Publications, New York, 1998, p. 17). Singular pronouns include “I,” “my,” and “he.”

We would expect that the pronouns that refer to the “Father,” to Jesus, and to “the Holy Spirit” would be singular if there were a Trinity, but since the Trinity teaches that “God” is triune and consists of three “Persons,” that the pronouns associated with “God” would be plural. This is especially the case because according to Trinitarian doctrine, each “Person” in the triune God is individually omnipresent, individually all-knowing; individually all-powerful, and each individually has his own will, his own mind (which is why Jesus could say to the Father, “not my will but yours be done”). John 3:16 (REV) reads, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have life in the age *to come.”* But if “God” were composed of three co-equal beings who each had their own mind and together agreed to send Christ, we would expect it to say, “For God so loved the world that they gave the Father’s only begotten Son….” The fact that the pronouns in the Bible refer to “God” as a singular being is evidence that there is no Trinity.

**3) The Old Testament foretold that Jesus would be a human being.**

The Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah foretold that he would be a human being. If we understand and believe that, it clears up a lot of misconceptions about Jesus. For example, if he was fully human and not part human and part God, then he had a beginning, which was the time when he was conceived (see Matt. 1:20 and section 9 below). Furthermore, he could not have existed before he was conceived; human beings do not exist before they are conceived, and this means that Jesus did not exist in the Old Testament except in the mind of God and in the expectation of people. According to the Old Testament prophecies, the Messiah would be the offspring of Eve (Gen. 3:15); a descendant of Abraham (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18), a descendant of Judah (Gen. 49:10); a prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:15); a son of David (2 Sam. 7:12-13; Isa. 11:1); a king ruling under Yahweh (Ps. 110:1); and a ruler from among the people of Israel (Jer. 30:21). That explains why the people were all expecting a human Messiah.

Even Mary, the mother of Jesus, was expecting a human Messiah and did not know how she could give birth to the Messiah without having sex with a man (Luke 1:34-35). Although some Trinitarians claim that there are a few Old Testament prophecies such as Isaiah 9:6 and Micah 5:2 that show that Jesus is God, it’s important to note that the ancient Jews, to whom those prophecies were given, never understood them to mean that their Messiah would be both God and human. Those few prophecies can be translated and understood in a Biblical Unitarian way.

[For more information, see the REV commentaries on Isa. 9:6 and Mic. 5:2.]

Psalm 110:1 merits special attention because it is especially clear but has been misunderstood and misrepresented. Most English versions read like the ESV: “The LORD says to my Lord….” The word “LORD” is Yahweh, but then many Trinitarian commentators argue that “my Lord” in this verse is the Hebrew word *adonai*, another name for God, and is therefore proof of the divinity of the Messiah. But the Hebrew text does not use *adonai*, it uses *adoni* (pronounced a-do-'nee), which is always used in Scripture to describe human masters and lords, but *never* God.

The Hebrew words *adoni* and *adonai* have the same root, *adon*, and that is the word listed in the concordances and most lexicons, which is one reason that we must use the actual Hebrew text to see what Psalm 110:1 is saying. The difference between *adon* (the “root” word), *adoni* (“lord,” always used of men or angels), and *adonai* (which is used of God and sometimes written *adonay*) is critical to the understanding of Psalm 110:1. The fact that the Hebrew text uses the word *adoni* of the Messiah in Psalm 110 is good supporting evidence that the Messiah is not God, and is one reason the Jews were expecting the Messiah to be a human ruler like the other kings who ruled under Yahweh.

The Old Testament also refers to the Messiah as “one like a son of man.” The phrase “son of man” was a Semitic idiom for a human being and it is used that way throughout the Old Testament. But when Daniel referred to the Messiah as “one like a son of man” (Dan. 7:13), the phrase “son of man” also became a title of the Messiah. That explains why Jesus called himself “the son of man” many times (cf. Matt. 8:20; 9:6; 10:23; 11:19; 12:8, 40; 13:41; 16:13, 27, 28; etc.). The use of “son of man” in reference to the Messiah is one more piece of evidence that Jesus was fully human and one more reason that people were expecting the Messiah to be human.

**4) The New Testament teaches that Jesus was a man**

The New Testament teaches that Jesus was a man. For one thing, Jesus himself said so. For example, in John 8:40, Jesus said he was “a **man** who has told you the truth” (emphasis added). Jesus was not being disingenuous and hiding his “divine nature.” He was making a factual statement that reinforced what the Jews were expecting of the Messiah—that he would be a fully human man.

The apostles also taught that Jesus was a man. For example, in his sermon to the crowds gathered on the Day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter made a very clear declaration that Jesus was a man approved of God: “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you…” (Acts 2:22 KJV). Here Peter clearly taught that Jesus was a man, and that God did miracles “by him.”

It seems if the Trinity did exist, that when Peter had thousands of devout Jews gathered together on the Day of Pentecost would have been a good time to introduce it to them. But instead, Peter told the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah they had been expecting: a man approved of God.

Like Peter, Paul also taught that Jesus was a man. For example, when he was in Athens, Paul taught a crowd of unsaved Gentiles about Jesus Christ and said that God would judge the world “by the man whom He has appointed” (Acts 17:31). Paul never said or implied that Jesus was anything but a “man.” But especially since Paul’s Greek audience was polytheistic, it seems that if there was a Trinity, Paul would have taught it to the crowd. Whereas the Jews would have likely been very upset if someone taught there was a Trinity, these polytheistic Greeks would almost certainly not have been upset, so this would have been a perfect time to introduce the subject to people. But instead, Paul said that Jesus was a man appointed by God.

There are a number of other New Testament verses that state that Jesus was a man. For example, Romans says that a man, Adam, caused sin to enter into the world, and also that a man would have to redeem it from sin. Romans 5:15 (ESV) says, “For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.” Some theologians teach that only God could pay for the sins of mankind, but the Bible specifically says that a man must do it. The book of Corinthians makes the same point Romans does. It says, “For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead” (1 Cor. 15:21 NASB).

1 Timothy 2:5 says that it is Jesus, the man, who was the mediator between God and men. 1 Timothy 2:5 (ESV) says, “For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” This verse calls Jesus Christ a “man” even after his resurrection.

Trinitarian doctrine tries to explain the verses that say Jesus was a man by saying that he was a man, but he was also 100% God at the same time. But there are problems with that. One is that there is no single verse that says Jesus was both God and man. The God-man doctrine is built from many verses. Furthermore, scholars admit that there are only about eight verses in the entire New Testament that can be understood to say that Jesus is God, and every one of them can either be translated in a way that supports the Biblical Unitarian position, or disputed textually, or can be explained from the use of the word “God” in the culture. In contrast, the clear verses where Jesus is said to be a “man,” such as when Peter or Paul taught their audiences that Jesus was a man appointed by God, are not disputed and in the context, there does not seem to be any good reason those men would not have said that Jesus was a God-man if in fact, that is what he is.

Actually, the book of Hebrews seems to clear up the subject when it says that when Jesus was on earth, he was made like us in every way: “Therefore he [Jesus] had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God” (Heb. 2:17 ESV). This verse shows that Jesus was not both fully human and fully God at the same time. If he were, he would not be like us in every respect. If we believe that Jesus was a fully human man, this verse can be seen to be completely true, but if Jesus is fully God and fully human, it is confusing at best. None of us would have the doubts, worries, and fears that we do if we were God. Saying that Jesus was made like us in every way is the Bible saying in a very straightforward way that Jesus was not “both God and human.”

**5) Jesus was like Adam**

Adam, the first man, was fully human and by his sin brought sin into the world. Jesus is called the “last Adam” (1 Cor. 15:45), but it seems that designation would not be appropriate if Jesus was not fully human in the same way that Adam was. Also, Adam is called a “type” of Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:14). The word translated as “type,” which occurs in many English versions, is the translation of the Greek word *tupos* (#5179 τύπος), which can be defined as “a type, pattern, model, or example of something else.” Although the KJV translates *tupos* as “figure,” most of the more modern versions say “pattern” (NIV), “prototype” (HCSB), or “type” (ESV, NAB, NASB). Adam was a type, prototype, or pattern of Christ because he was fully human and began without a sin nature—and Jesus was the same: fully human and made without a sin nature. The reason that no other human male after Adam could be a “type” of Christ is that we are all born with a sin nature. But if Jesus was 100% man and 100% God, then Adam could not be a “type” of Christ, because Adam did not have a “God-nature.”

Another reason that Christ can rightfully be referred to as the “last Adam” is that God brought them both into existence. There was a time when neither Adam nor Christ existed, and both of them are called “the son of God” (Luke 1:35; 3:38). Furthermore, both Adam and Christ existed due to a creative act of God. God created Adam from the dirt of the ground (Gen. 2:7) and God created a sperm in Mary that impregnated her egg, and the resulting child was Jesus (Luke 1:31; see the REV commentary on Luke 1:31). Although Trinitarians claim that Jesus was “eternally begotten,” that is a self-contradictory nonsense phrase that was invented to explain how Jesus could be both the begotten “Son” and thus by vocabulary and logic have a beginning, and yet also supposedly be eternal, which was necessary for Trinitarian doctrine. Jesus Christ, like every other “son” who has ever lived, had a beginning and came after the father existed.

**6) Jesus has a God**

The Bible says in many verses that there is only one God, and “God” does not have a God. For example, in Isaiah 44:6, God says, “…there is no God besides me,” and Ephesians 4:6 identifies the one God with the Father and says there is “one God and Father of all, who is over all.” In contrast to “God” who alone is God and does not have a God, Jesus has a God.

Before his death and resurrection, when he was on the cross, Jesus called out, “**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me**?” (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). Later, after his resurrection, he spoke of his God to Mary Magdalene, saying, “…I ascend to my Father and your Father, and **my God** and your God” (John 20:17). Then, after his ascension into heaven when he was standing at the right hand of God, Jesus still called God, “my God.” Jesus said about those who are victorious that he will “write on him the name of **my God**” and “the name of the city of **my God**” that comes down out of heaven from “**my God**.” (Rev. 3:12). Revelation 1:5-6 also says that Jesus is a faithful witness and ruler and has made us priests to “**his God**.” In the Old Testament, the prophet spoke of the coming Messiah and said he would shepherd the people “in the strength of Yahweh, in the majesty of the name of Yahweh his God” (Mic. 5:4).

Also, there are verses in the New Testament that clearly speak of “God” being the “God” of Jesus Christ. Romans 15:6 says, “...you can, with one mouth, glorify **the God** and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Corinthians 1:3, Ephesians 1:3, and 1 Peter 1:3 all say, “Blessed *be* **the God** and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Hebrews 1:9 speaks of how God blessed Jesus: “**Therefore God, your God,** has anointed you [Jesus] with the oil of gladness.” 2 Corinthians 11:31 says, “**The God** and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.”

Who is the “God” of the Lord Jesus Christ? The New Testament makes it clear: “**the God** of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory” (Eph. 1:17), and “and [Jesus] has made us to be a kingdom, as priests **to his God** and Father. So the “one God and Father” (Eph. 4:6) is the God of Jesus Christ. In contrast to Jesus, who both Scripture and Jesus himself testify that Jesus has a God, the “one God” of the Bible never says He has a God. He is God, the Father, the Creator, “the Most High God,” and He has no equals. Jesus is not “God,” he is a man, the Last Adam, the created Son of God, and Jesus’ God is God the Father.

**7) Jesus called God “the only true God.”**

Jesus called the Father “the only God” (John 5:44 ESV). The New American Standard Bible goes so far as to translate it as “the *one and* only God.” The straightforward reading of this verse is that Jesus did not think of himself as God.

Similarly, on the night he was arrested, Jesus prayed to God that people would “know you, the only true God” (John 17:3). It seems disingenuous, or at least confusing, that Jesus would refer to his Father as “the only true God” if he knew that both he and “the Holy Spirit” were also “Persons” in a triune God, and that the Father shared His position as “God” with them. It seems much more likely that Jesus spoke the simple truth when he called his Father “the only true God.”

Furthermore, Jesus called God the “Lord of heaven and earth.” Luke 10:21 says, “In that same hour he [Jesus] was full of joy in the holy spirit, and said, ‘I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you hid these things from the wise and understanding, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, because this was well-pleasing in your sight.’” If the Trinity was true and Jesus was co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, he would not have addressed him as “Lord of heaven and earth.” That is not the way equals address each other. Also, if the Holy Spirit was a third member of the Trinity and thus also “Lord of heaven and earth,” it seems that Jesus would not have left him out of his prayer, which was to the Father.

**8) Jesus was part of God’s creation**

Colossians 1:15 (ESV) calls Jesus “the firstborn of all creation.” Scholars disagree on what this phrase means, but that is primarily because the doctrine of the Trinity obscures its simple meaning. Trinitarian doctrine states that Jesus is “eternal,” but if that is true, then he cannot be the firstborn “of all creation” because that would make him part of the creation—Jesus would be a created being. But the simple reading of Colossians 1:15 seems clear: Jesus is a created being. The BDAG *Greek-English Lexicon* [entry under “creation”] explains the Greek word translated “creation” as “that which is created…of individual things or beings created, *creature*.” Not only was Jesus a created being, he is also called the “firstborn” from the dead because he was the first one in God’s creation who was raised from the dead to everlasting life—a point that is also made in Colossians 1:18 and Revelation 1:5.

**9) God is eternal, but Jesus had a beginning**

God was not born; He is eternal. In contrast to the eternal God, Christ is “begotten,” that is, born. Jesus Christ had a beginning. Jesus is never called “God the Son” in the Bible, but he is called the “Son of God” more than 50 times, and a “son” has a beginning. The very fact that Jesus is the “Son of God” shows he had a beginning. Trinitarian doctrine denies this and invents the phrase “eternally begotten.” But “eternally begotten” is not in the Bible; it was invented to help explain the Trinity but is actually a nonsensical phrase; the words are placed together but they cancel each other out. “Eternal” means without beginning or end, whereas something that is “begotten,” by definition, has a beginning.

We cannot approach the Bible with wisdom and “reason together” with God (Isa. 1:18) if we must invent and use non-biblical phrases to support our theology. Also, additional evidence that Jesus had a beginning is provided in verses such as Matthew 1:18, which speaks of the “beginning” of Jesus Christ (see commentary on Matt. 1:18), and Colossians 1:15 (covered above), which says that Jesus is part of God’s creation. The Bible calls Jesus the “Son” of God for the simple reason that he had a beginning. Jesus had been part of God’s plan since the foundation of the world, but he began his actual life when God “fathered” him and Mary conceived him in her womb.

Once we understand that Jesus had a beginning, it is logical to ask when that beginning occurred. Jesus was foretold to come from early Genesis (Gen. 3:15; and we know Abraham knew about his coming (John 8:56; Heb. 11:17-19). but he did not actually exist as a genuine person until he was conceived in the womb of Mary (see commentary on Matt. 1:20; and for Jesus being an actual human being, see section 3 above, that Jesus would be fully human).

**10) The Bible teaches that Jesus and God are two distinct beings.**

There are many verses where Jesus and God are portrayed as two separate beings. There are too many examples to list, but for example, in Mark 10:18, Jesus told the rich young ruler that he was not good, but “God” was good; in Luke 2:52, Jesus grew in favor with “God” and with men; Jesus said to the Jews that he was “a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God” (John 8:40 ESV); and he told his disciples, “Believe in God; believe also in me” (John 14:1 ESV).

Also, the Church Epistles were authored by both God *and* Christ. For example, 1 Corinthians 1:3 (ESV) says, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” The book of Revelation shows both God and “the Lamb” ruling in the eternal city (Rev. 22:1, 3). In all these examples, Jesus is shown to be separate and distinct from “God,” which is what the people of the time believed and expected.

The Trinitarian explanation of these verses is that Jesus is God, so when Jesus speaks of himself and “God,” then “God” means “the Father.” But the Bible never says that. It is only because Trinitarian doctrine asserts that Jesus is God that the assumption is made that when Jesus and God appear together, “God” means “the Father.” But the simple and straightforward reading of Scripture is that there is Jesus and there is “God,” so Jesus is not God.

Jesus and God have separate wills. Jesus prayed to God, “not my will, but yours, be done” (Luke 22:42 ESV; cf. John 5:30). If Jesus and the Father are the same “one God,” then they would have one will. Trinitarian doctrine claims that Luke is referring to Jesus’ human will, not his divine will, but that is problematic. For one thing, the Bible never says anything like that; it is an invented explanation. It would also mean that Jesus had two wills in conflict with each other inside him, one human and one divine. But that surely cannot be the case: Jesus himself taught that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (Mark 3:24).

The Bible says that Jesus is an “heir” of God (Heb. 1:2), and a “joint heir” with us (Rom. 8:17). But if Christ is a co-eternal “Person” in the “Godhead,” then he cannot be an heir “of God” because, being God, he would be full owner of everything and there is nothing he could “inherit.” Jesus cannot be God and an heir of God at the same time.

The Bible says that Jesus Christ is the “image of God” (Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4). But if Christ is the image of God, then He cannot be God, because a person cannot be himself and an image of himself at the same time. Jesus can be called the “image” of God because he always did the will of God and acted like God Himself would act. The fact that Jesus was the image of God is why Jesus could say that if you had seen him, you had seen the Father.

Ephesians 4:4-6 is recognized by many Christians as listing seven of the most essential doctrines of the Christian Faith. It says there is one God and one Lord and one spirit. This verse teaches exactly what the Jews expected based on the Old Testament, and what Jesus, Peter, Paul, and others taught: that there was one God, one Lord, the Messiah, and one spirit of God. There are three separate things being spoken about here, but not “one God” composed of both Jesus and God, and “the Holy Spirit” as well.

[See Appendix 7: “What is the Holy Spirit?”]

**11) The Bible teaches that the Father is God**

The Bible says that the proper name of God is “Yahweh” (Exodus 3:15), and “Yahweh” is used over 5,000 times in the Old Testament. Furthermore, “Yahweh” is clearly said to be “God” in over 1,100 verses in the Old Testament, which can be seen by anyone with a good concordance (e.g., Gen. 17:1; 21:33; 24:3; Exod. 5:3; 20:2; 34:14; Lev. 19:2; Num. 15:41; Deut. 4:35; 10:17; Josh. 22:22; 2 Sam. 7:28; Ps. 18:31; 33:12; 88:1; 99:5; 100:3; Isa. 43:3). Also, Yahweh is said to be the “father” (e.g. Deut. 32:6; Ps. 2:7; Isa. 63:16; 64:8; Mal. 1:6; cf. Ps. 103:13; Prov. 3:12). Also, the Bible says in many verses that “Yahweh” is the only God, and there is no God besides Him (e.g., Deut. 4:35, 39; 6:4; 2 Sam. 7:22; 1 Kings 8:60; 2 Kings 19:15; 1 Chron. 17:20; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 18:31; 86:10; Isa. 37:16; 43:10; 44:6, 8; 45:5, 21; 46:9; Hos. 13:4; Joel 2:27; Zech. 14:9). So clearly in the Old Testament “God” is Yahweh, the Father, and He is the only God, “there is no other” (Deut. 4:39).

Given those clear scriptures, there would have to be very clear scriptures in the New Testament that say Jesus is also God, but those scriptures do not exist.

Jesus called God “the only true God” (John 17:3) and called Him “my God” (Matt. 27:46; John 20:17; Rev. 3:2, 12).

1 Corinthians 8:6 (ESV) says, “for us there is one God, the Father…and one Lord, Jesus Christ.” This simple and straightforward language elucidates that the Father is God and the Son is “Lord,” making a clear differentiation between the two. Furthermore, that distinction is even clearer when we consider that in the Greek culture the word “God”—although it was used more loosely than we do in English and was used of pagan gods and even human rulers—was used in a more restricted manner than was the word “Lord,” which was used of many different kinds of people in authority.

1 Corinthians 8:6 starts out, “for us there is one God,” and if the doctrine of the Trinity were true, we would expect it to finish in a typically Trinitarian fashion, such as, “the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” We would certainly not expect it to name only the Father as “God” and omit “the Holy Spirit” altogether. There are a number of verses that clearly indicate that the Father alone is God (e.g., Deut. 4:35, 39; 2 Sam. 7:22; 1 Kings 8:60; 2 Kings 19:15; 1 Chron. 17:20; Neh. 9:6; Psalm 18:31; 86:10; Isa. 37:16-20; 45:5, 21; 46:9; Joel 2:27; John 17:3; Rom. 3:30; 1 Cor. 8:4-5; Gal. 3:20; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2:5; James 2:19).

**12) God is greater than Christ**

Jesus said: “…the Father is greater than I” (John 14:28 ESV). He also said, “My father...is greater than all” (John 10:29). In contrast, the orthodox formula of the Trinity says that the Father and the Son are “co-equal.” We see no reason not to believe Jesus’ simple statement.

God is greater than Christ, just as Christ is greater than we are. 1 Corinthians 3:23 (KJV) says, “And ye are Christ’s; and Christ *is* God’s.” When the Bible says, “you are Christ’s,” it is saying, “you belong to Christ” and many English versions say exactly that (i.e., CJB, HCSB, NASB, NET, NJB, NLT). So the verse is saying, “and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God” (NASB). It seems apparent that Jesus cannot be God and belong to God at the same time.

The Bible teaches that God is the “head” of Christ, that is, He is Christ’s leader: “But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3 ESV). The Trinitarian explanation of this verse is that God was the head of Christ only while he was on earth, but the Bible never says that. In fact, the Bible shows us the opposite: God is still the head of Christ and directing him even after he ascended into heaven, and will be for eternity (1 Cor. 15:28; Rev. 1:1; 14:14-15).

God can be seen to be greater than the Messiah in Psalm 2. In that Psalm, God’s Messiah is called “his anointed” (Ps. 2:2), and God says, “I have set **my King** on Zion, my holy hill” (Ps. 2:6 ESV, emphasis added). The Messiah is not being shown to be a co-equal ruler with God, but God’s under-ruler. Furthermore, God says He fathered the Messiah: “You are my Son; today I have begotten you” (Ps. 2:7 ESV). Although commentators argue about which day “today” refers to, it is clear that the Messiah is begotten at a specific time in history; he is not “eternally begotten.”

God “made” Jesus Lord. In Peter’s teaching to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, he taught that “God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.” (Acts 2:36 ESV). In order to make Jesus Lord, God must have greater authority than Jesus. Furthermore, if Christ was God, then he was already “Lord”—in which case God would not need to “make” him Lord.

It has also been taught that because Jesus is called “Lord,” he must be God. But “Lord” (the Greek word is *kurios*) is a masculine title of respect and nobility, and many others besides God and Jesus are called “Lord,” However, that can be hard to see in English Bibles because many times *kurios* is not translated as “Lord,” and that confuses the issue.

1. property owners are called Lord (Matt. 20:8, *kurios* is “owner” in NIV)
2. heads of households were called Lord (Mark 13:35, owner=*kurios*).
3. slave owners were called Lord (Matt. 10:24, master=*kurios*).
4. husbands were called Lord (1 Pet. 3:6, master (NIV) =*kurios*).
5. a son called his father Lord (Matt. 21:30, sir=*kurios*).
6. the Roman Emperor was called Lord (Acts 25:26, His Majesty=*kurios*).
7. Roman authorities were called Lord (Matt. 27:63, sir=*kurios*).

Christians take Jesus as their “Lord,” but that is not the same as saying he is “God.”

The Bible says that even in the future, the Son will be subject to the Father. “When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him [God] who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28 ESV). If Jesus is subject to the Father in the eternal future, then it seems the teaching that the two of them are “co-equal” is wrong.

Jesus was consecrated (sanctified) by God. John 10:36 (ESV) says: “do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?” The fact that Jesus was consecrated, or as it is translated in other versions, “sanctified,” by God shows he is not God, because God does not need to be sanctified.

Philippians 2:6 (ESV) says that Christ “did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped” (cf. NAB, NASB, NET, NIV, NJB, Rotherham). There is some disagreement among scholars as to how to translate the Greek text, so other English versions translate the verse somewhat differently. Nevertheless, the point of the verse is that Jesus Christ was highly exalted by God because he was humble and did not seek equality with God. If Jesus was God, then he would never have needed to seek equality with God in the first place—it would have been inherent in him.

Jesus received his direction and his doctrine from his Father, God. In John 5:19 (ESV), he said: “the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing.” Jesus repeated that in several different ways. “I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge…because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me” (John 5:30 ESV). “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me” (John 7:16 ESV). “I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me” (John 8:28 ESV). “For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak” (John 12:49 ESV). If Jesus was God, and co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, then he would not have needed to be directed by his Father.

As Jesus said, God, his Father, “sent” him. God has sent people to do His will for millennia. God sent the prophets (e.g., 2 Chr. 24:19; 25:15; Jer. 7:25; 25:4, 5; 28:9; 35:15; 44:4; Baruch 1:21), and He sent John the Baptist (John 1:6), and He sent Jesus (Luke 10:16; John 3:17, 5:23, 7:16; 12:49). The fact that God “sent” Jesus actually argues against the Trinity, because if the Trinity were true, then the Father did not need to “send” Jesus, he would have come on his own.

The Old Testament referred to the Messiah as the servant of God. For example, in Isaiah 52-53, which speak of the suffering and death of the Messiah, the Bible refers to the Messiah as God’s “servant” (Isa. 52:13; cf. Zech. 3:8). When the disciples prayed to God in Acts, they called King David God’s “servant” (Acts 4:25), and later in that same prayer they called Jesus “your holy servant” (Acts 4:30 CSB, ESV, NAB, NASB, NET, NIV, NJB). They equated the Messiah as a servant of God just like David was, rather than referring to Jesus as if he were God himself (cf. Matt. 12:18; Acts 3:26). Jesus is not God but the servant of God, just like the Bible says.

Many verses indicate that Jesus’ power and authority were given to him by the Father. If Jesus was the eternal God, then he would have always had those things that the Scripture says he was “given.” Christ was:

* Given “all authority” (Matt. 28:18).
* Given “a name above every name” (Phil. 2:9).
* Given work to finish by the Father (John 5:36).
* Given those who believed in him by the Father (John 6:39; John 10:29).
* Given glory (John 17:22, 24).
* Given his “cup” (his torture and death) by the Father (John 18:11).
* “Seated” at God’s own right hand (Eph. 1:20-21).
* “Appointed” over the Church (Eph. 1:22).

These verses and others like them make no sense if Christ is “co-equal” with the Father. Taken at face value, they show Jesus is a man approved of God.

A rich young ruler came to Christ and called him, “Good Teacher” (Luke 18:18 ESV). Jesus replied, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone” (Luke 18:19 ESV). If Jesus was telling people that he was God, why did he not compliment this young ruler for calling him “good?” That Jesus gave the man a mild rebuke and said that no one was good except “God” is evidence that Jesus was not teaching people that he was God. Jesus was very quick to make the distinction between himself and God, and in doing so affirmed what this Jewish man would have already believed: that there is one God, and Jesus was certainly not that one God.

Luke 2:52 says that Jesus grew in favor with “God.” But if Jesus were God and part of the Trinity, he could not grow in favor with himself or the Father or the Holy Spirit. The mutual love and blessing among the members of the Trinity would have been eternal and unchanging. Jesus could only grow in favor with God if he himself were not God.

When it comes to assigning positions of authority in the coming Kingdom of Christ, Jesus said that who will sit next to him as people with authority “is not mine to give, but *it is for those* for whom it has been prepared by my Father” (Matt. 20:23). If Jesus were God and co-equal with the Father, those positions of authority would be his to give.

Despite the popularity of the term “Deity of Christ,” the phrase never appears in the Bible, nor is Christ ever called “Deity” in the Bible. “Deity” is from the Latin “*Deus*,” which means “God,” and the phrase “the Deity of Christ” as it is popularly (but not biblically) used means the “Godness” of Christ.

Colossians 2:9 (ESV) says that in Christ “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.” This verse is stating that God (the Deity) placed all His fullness in Christ, which is quite different from saying that Christ is *himself* a Deity. Earlier in Colossians, the concept is made clear: “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him” (Col. 1:19 NIV84). That is true. But the fact that Christ has “all the fullness” of God does not make him God. Ephesians 3:19 says that Christians should be filled with “all the fullness of God,” as well, but that does not mean Christians will somehow become God.

**13) Jesus died, but God is immortal**

In the New Testament, 1 Timothy 6:16 is a reference to the Father, not to Jesus Christ, and it says that God alone has immortality. That the verse is about God, not Jesus, is clear from the description in the verse, that He “alone has immortality, who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen, nor is able to see.” Those descriptions refer to the Father, not to Jesus Christ, and “He” (the Father) will bring about the return of Christ in its proper time (1 Tim. 6:15).

Orthodox Christianity teaches that Jesus died and then that he raised himself from the dead, based on John 2:19; 10:17-18. It is so often said that Jesus was God and also that Jesus died that we have forgotten that is actually nonsensical. God cannot die (1 Tim. 1:17, 6:16; Psa. 90:2; Isa. 40:28; Rom. 16:26), and yet the most essential part of our faith is that Jesus died and was raised from the dead. If Jesus was dead then he was not “God” who is immortal, and he did not raise himself from the dead if, in fact, he was really dead.”

Trinitarians get around the fact that Jesus was dead by saying that only his human nature died, but there are quite a few problems with that. Firstly, the Council of Chalcedon, which Trinitarians hold to, would consider that idea a heresy. Speaking of Jesus, it says that he is “acknowledged in Two Natures unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably… not as though He were parted or divided into Two Persons, but One and the Self-same Son and Only-begotten God, Word, Lord, Jesus Christ” (The Chalcedonian Definition, Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon, AD 451). The idea that Jesus’ human nature could be separated from his divine nature is a form of Nestorianism, which is considered a heresy by Trinitarians and was condemned at the Council of Ephesus (AD 431) and also the Council of Chalcedon, as shown above. Therefore, saying that it was only Jesus’ human nature that died is, according to Trinitarians themselves, a heresy.

Secondly, the Bible never says that only Jesus’ human nature died. In fact, the Bible never says that Jesus had two natures. That is a Trinitarian assumption not directly based on Scripture. Furthermore, the Bible never says “Jesus’ human nature died and was raised,” it says that “Jesus” died and was raised. The more subtle problem with saying that only Jesus’ human nature died, is that then the Trinitarian “Jesus” (with two natures) did not die on the cross. “Jesus” is not just one nature, he is two natures according to Trinitarians. Trinitarian doctrine is that “Jesus” is a Person in the Trinity who has two natures, a human nature and a divine nature. No Trinitarian document about Jesus says that “Jesus” is only the human nature. Trinitarians are unanimous that “Jesus” is a Person with two natures. That would mean that when “Jesus” died, both natures were dead. But that cannot be correct: God cannot die, so Jesus’ supposed “God nature” could not die.

Since according to Trinitarian doctrine the two natures of Christ cannot be split apart, then it seems that any Trinitarian either has to believe that God (Jesus) died, which is nonsensical, or believe that Jesus was not God and therefore, could die for our sins.

**14) Major differences between Jesus and God**

It is obvious from the Bible that Jesus differed from God in many ways. These points of difference reveal that Jesus cannot be “God.” Many Trinitarians explain the differences between Jesus and God by saying that it is just Jesus’ “human nature” that is different from God, not his “God nature.” However, according to orthodox Christian doctrine established at the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), the two natures of Christ cannot be divided (see section 13). It is a heresy to divide the two natures of Christ according to Trinitarian theology. Therefore, Trinitarians have to come up with an acceptable explanation of how “God” (Jesus) could do all the things listed below.

* **Wisdom**  
  Jesus grew in wisdom, but God is all-wise. The Bible says, “And Jesus increased in wisdom” (Luke 2:52 ESV). Also, Jesus “learned obedience” (Heb. 5:8). God does not need to learn. Trinitarians assert that it was Jesus’ human part that grew and learned, but there is not a single verse that makes that distinction. Also, it would be considered heresy according to the Council of Chalcedon because it would be splitting apart the two natures of Christ.
* **Knowledge**  
  Jesus had limited knowledge, whereas God does not. Mark 13:32 (ESV) says: “But concerning that day or that hour [when the Son returns; Mark 13:26], no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” But even in the future long after he has ascended into heaven, Jesus still receives instruction from God as to when to return to earth and “reap,” i.e., conquer the earth (Rev. 14:14-16). Other verses also show Jesus receiving knowledge from God after his resurrection and ascension: “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him” (Rev. 1:1 ESV). [For a more complete explanation of Jesus not knowing the time of the End, see commentary on Matt. 24:36, “nor the Son.”]
* **Perfection/Growth**  
  The Scripture teaches that it was fitting that “God” should make Jesus “perfect through suffering” (Heb. 2:10). God is, and has always been, “perfect,” but Jesus needed to attain perfection through his suffering.  
    
  To perfectly obey God throughout his ministry, Jesus needed the gift of holy spirit, and he received it at his baptism (Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22) and had it upon him when he started his ministry (Luke 4:18). If Jesus was God, he would not need holy spirit, which is the very nature of God. God placed the gift of His holy spirit on the leaders and prophets of the Old Testament so that they would have spiritual power and be able to hear from Him via the spirit upon them (i.e., Num. 11:17-29; Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 1 Sam. 10:6, 10; 16:13; 1 Chron. 12:18; 2 Chron. 15:1; Mic. 3:8). Furthermore, the Old Testament prophecies, such as those in Isaiah 11:2; 42:1, and 61:1, indicated that God would put His spirit upon His Messiah, showing that he was not fully equipped without it. Jesus needed the gift of holy spirit to be spiritually powerful just as the other prophets did. Acts 10:38 (REV) says: “Jesus, the one from Nazareth—how God anointed him with holy spirit and with power, and he went around doing good, and healing all those who were being oppressed by the Devil, for God was with him.”
* **Temptation**  
  Jesus was “one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15 ESV), yet the Bible is clear that God cannot be tempted: “for God cannot be tempted with evil” (James 1:13 ESV).  
    
  At times of weakness or difficulty, angels ministered to and strengthened Jesus. Luke 22:43 (ESV) says: “And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him” [in the garden of Gethsemane]. Humans need to be strengthened; God does not need to be strengthened by angels or by anyone or anything else (cf. also Matt. 4:11, Mark 1:13).
* **Death**  
  Scripture says very plainly that Jesus died. God cannot die. Romans 1:23 and other verses say that God is immortal. Orthodox Christian doctrine is that only the human side of Jesus died, but that assertion is based on assumptions. No verse of Scripture says anything like “only Jesus’ human nature died.”
* **Family**  
  Hebrews 2:10-11 teaches that we are “brothers” of Jesus and “sons of God,” and Jesus is never ashamed to call us such. Hebrews is making a distinction between God and Jesus that is very important and that we lose if we think Jesus is God. If that were the case, we would be “brothers of God,” but we clearly are not that. A Trinitarian explanation is that we are brothers of the man part of Jesus, but that is adding to the text. The Bible nowhere says or implies that; it is an assumption to support Trinitarian doctrine.
* **Works**  
  We are commissioned to do “greater works” than Jesus. In John 14:12 (ESV), Jesus told his disciples that “whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do.” If Jesus was God, then his statement would be a commission for us to do greater works than God—which is not possible.

If Jesus Christ was God, he would have to have the attributes of God. Most theologians agree that some of God’s attributes are: unoriginated, self-existent, immortal, all-wise, all-good, all-powerful, and omnipresent. But Jesus had none of those attributes.

* He was not unoriginated. Christ was the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16).
* He was not self-existent. “I live because of the Father” (John 6:57).
* He was not immortal. Jesus died and God resurrected Him (Acts 13:30).
* He was not all wise. Jesus “grew in wisdom” (Luke 2:52).
* He was not all-powerful. Whereas “nothing is impossible with God” (Luke 1:37), Christ said, “the Son can do nothing by Himself” (John 5:19) and he “was not able to do any miracles there, except that he healed a few sick people” (Mark 6:5).
* He was not omnipresent. After Lazarus died, Jesus told his disciples, “I am glad I was not there” (John 11:15).

**15) God is spirit, but Jesus is flesh and bone**

God is Spirit (John 4:24), yet even after his resurrection, Jesus said about himself that he was not a spirit, but flesh and bone. When Jesus appeared to his apostles, he said, “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have” (Luke 24:39 ESV). That Jesus is still flesh and bone today is exactly what we would expect if Jesus is a “man approved of God.” Part of the great hope that we Christians have is that in the future Jesus “will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body” (Phil. 3:21 ESV). So in the future we will have bodies like Jesus’ body, but that hardly seems appropriate if Jesus is God in the flesh.

**16) Jesus never taught the Trinity**

John 1:18 says that Jesus made “God” known to people. But if “God” is a triune God composed of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, then Jesus did not make God known. Jesus never taught the Trinity, even when he had good opportunities to do so. In fact, Jesus taught quite the opposite, he taught that the Father alone was God. A good example of Jesus not teaching the Trinity occurred when Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-42), he told her that he was the Messiah (John 4:26), but he never mentioned the Trinity and in fact, he said, “the hour is coming...when the true worshipers will worship the Father” (John 4:23), thus reinforcing the woman’s belief that there was one God that people should worship. Similarly, when Jesus asked the apostles who they thought he was, and Peter said that Jesus was the Christ, Jesus did not take that opportunity to teach them the Trinity (Matt. 16:17-20). In fact, Jesus said that it was “my Father in heaven” who revealed that to Peter, reinforcing Peter’s belief that it was God in heaven who revealed things. Also, when Jesus healed the man who had been blind from birth, he told him that he was the Messiah but did not say a word about the Trinity (John 9:35-38), in fact, the blind man who had been healed thought Jesus was a man who worshiped God and that is why he could heal. The man said, “God does not hear sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, he hears him...If this man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything” (John 9:31, 33). Another record is of the rich young ruler, and when the young man called Christ, “Good master,” Jesus not only did not teach the man the Trinity, he rebuffed him and said the only one who was good was God (Mark 10:17-18).

Other examples could also be given, but the point is that even when Jesus had the opportunity to teach the Trinity, he never did. That is astounding if the doctrine of the Trinity is correct, because the people were expecting a human Messiah, not “God in the flesh.” So when Jesus told them he was the Messiah but did not say anything about there being a Trinity, he was only reinforcing what they already thought, and that was doubly true when Jesus not only did not teach the Trinity but pointed people away from himself and to God. A wonderful example of Jesus reinforcing what the Jews already believed is in Mark 12:28-34.

In that record, an expert in the Mosaic Law asked Jesus what was the most important commandment in the Law. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4-5, which includes the Shema: “Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our God, Yahweh alone.” The expert agreed that was the greatest commandment and then added to what Jesus said by quoting Deuteronomy 4:35, “and there is no other except him” (Mark 12:32). The Jews were not Trinitarians, so this expert in the law would have understood the Shema to be referring to God the Father, and no one else, and certainly not Jesus, the man standing in front of him. Yet Jesus agreed with what the expert said, and thought the expert had answered him “wisely” (Mark 12:34). Jesus even said to him, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God” (Mark 12:34). This conversation is very good evidence that Jesus did not consider himself to be God. Beyond that, according to Trinitarian theology, a person must believe that Jesus is God to be saved, but it is apparent that Jesus did not believe that, because not only did he not make an attempt to “correct” the theology of this expert in the Law, he actually affirmed what the Jew said. So, really, there are two issues that are clarified by this conversation: a person does not have to believe in the Trinity to be saved, and Jesus himself did not teach the Trinity but instead taught that God alone was God.

There does not seem to be any compelling reason not to take Jesus’ words at face value; that he was the human Messiah the Jews were expecting and not a God-man that they were not expecting.

Trinitarians also commonly say that Jesus claimed to be God, and for that reason, the Jews hated him and tried to kill him. But that is not the case. Jesus had been stating in various ways that he was the Messiah, and that is what the Jews were upset about. Throughout their history, the Jews made a clear distinction between “God” and the “Messiah.” They did not think the Messiah was going to be God or a “Person” in a triune God, and if Jesus had walked around saying he was God, the Jews would have considered him insane, but not a threat. But for Jesus to claim to be the Messiah of God and also do miracles, now that was a threat. Jesus had not been claiming to be God in the flesh, so at his trial, the Jews never asked Jesus, “Are you God in the flesh?” Instead, they asked Jesus about what he had been claiming to be: the Messiah.

At his trial, the High Priest said to Jesus, “‘I charge you under oath by the living God, that you tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.’ Jesus said to him, ‘*Yes*, it is as you say’” (Matt. 26:63-64). The conversation would have been somewhat protracted, and Mark records the High Priest asking, “‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ And Jesus said, ‘I am’” (Mark 14:61-62, cf. Luke 22:67-71). When Jesus stated that he was the Messiah, “Then the high priest tore his garments, saying, ‘Defaming talk! What further need do we have of witnesses? See! Now you have heard the defamation. What do you think?’ They answered and said, ‘He is deserving of death’” (Matt. 26:65-66). So from the trial of Jesus, we see that the Jews correctly assessed that Jesus had been claiming to be the Christ, also that Jesus indeed said he was the Christ, and also that the Jews thought Jesus’ claim was worthy of the death penalty. The trial gives good evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, but not God in the flesh.

**17) Many people are saved in the Bible without believing in the Trinity or that Jesus is God**

One example of a person being saved without believing in the Trinity is the sinful woman who anointed Jesus’ feet with her tears while he was eating. All Jesus said to her was, “Your sins are forgiven” and “Your trust has saved you. Go in peace” (Luke 7:48 and 50). It is highly unlikely that this Galilean Jewess believed that Jesus was part of a Triune God, and by knowing that she gained salvation. Such an assumption would be to stretch the record beyond credible limits. The woman was a sinner, not a theologian, and if she went to synagogue at all, which is questionable, she would have known about the Messiah only from what the Old Testament taught. The Bible says why she was saved: she loved and trusted in Jesus (Luke 7:47, 50).

When Jesus asked Peter, “Who do you say that I am?” (Matt. 16:15). Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God” (Matt. 16:16). Peter believed Jesus was the Christ he had been taught about in the synagogue and was expecting, not that Jesus was God in the flesh who was part of the Trinity. Yet Jesus did not correct Peter, but instead complimented him on his insight, saying he was “Blessed” (Matt. 16:17).

The book of Acts records the teachings of the apostles and disciples as they spread the good news of Jesus. Thus, it is reasonable that if the doctrine of the Trinity were a truth not revealed in the Old Testament but necessary for Christian salvation, it should be clearly taught in Acts. We will simply take one story in Acts for the sake of brevity, which is Acts 2:14-36. Peter spoke to the crowd of unsaved Jews in the Temple on the Day of Pentecost, just 50 days after Jesus was crucified. All they knew about the Messiah was from the Old Testament and traditions about him, none of which included the doctrine of the Trinity or Jesus being God. On Pentecost, however, Peter presented Jesus as a “man pointed out to you by God,” who was crucified and whom God raised from the dead, much of which Peter backed up by quoting the Old Testament. Peter never mentioned the Trinity or Jesus being God, yet about three thousand people got saved that day. This is very good evidence that on the Day of Pentecost, the start of the Christian Church, a person did not have to believe in the Trinity to be saved.

One could go through the book of Acts, but you will never find someone teaching the Trinity before people are saved, it simply is not there. A search of the New Testament will show that there is no Trinitarian formula that speaks of three Persons in One God, or Jesus being both fully human and fully God that was spoken to people before they got saved, which is not only evidence that a person did not have to believe in the Trinity to be saved, it is evidence that there is no Trinity.

**18) When the Jews thought Jesus was claiming to be God, he denied it**

Most Trinitarians assert that Jesus claimed to be God in John 5:16-18: “16And for this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. 17But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is always working, and I am *always* working.’ 18For this reason, the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he not only was ‘breaking the Sabbath,’ but also was calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.”

The first thing we should notice is that even the Jews did not say, “Jesus is calling himself God.” They were claiming he was saying he was equal with God, but they were wrong in that. Jesus corrected their thinking and immediately stated: “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son is not able to do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing….” (John 5:19) This is not an affirmation of equality. If it was, Jesus would not have said that he was not able to do anything on his own. If Jesus was God, or even “equal with God,” he would be able to do things on his own, just as God does. So, Jesus’ refutation of the claim of the Jews is evidence that Jesus is not God.

Most Trinitarians assert that the Jews said that Jesus was claiming to be God in John 10:33 (NIV2011): “‘We are not stoning You for any good work,’ said the Jews, ‘but for blasphemy, because You, who are a man, declare Yourself to be God.’” The Jews were wrong in their assertion. If what they said was true, it seems that Jesus would have affirmed it in some way.

Instead, right after the accusation of the Jews, Jesus answered them and said, “Is it not written in your law, I have said, you are ‘gods?’ If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken—what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’ (John 10:34-36 NIV2011)?” Jesus explicitly says that what he was claiming to be was God’s Son, not God himself. Jesus could not be much clearer here in that he is not claiming to be God himself. Claiming to be God’s Son is not a claim to be God, it is a claim to be the Messiah and the Jews understood that (Ps. 2:7; John 1:49), and that is what they asked him about at his trial before the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:63) and that is what they had been asking him about in John 10:24, which was the context of John 10:33. Thus, both of these occurrences in John 5 and John 10 demonstrate that Jesus did not consider himself to be God, and did not teach others that he was God.

Some Trinitarians will say that Jesus is not denying being God in John 5 or John 10 because he does not say, ‘No, I am not God.’ However, believing Jesus’ responses to be an affirmation is unjustified for the reasons stated above and also because we have examples throughout the New Testament of what it looks like when Jesus does affirm people’s claims about him, and they differ greatly from John 5 and John 10. For example, at his trial, the High Priest said to Jesus, “‘I charge you under oath by the living God, that you tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.’ Jesus said to him, ‘*Yes*, it is as you say’” (Matt. 26:63-64). Mark records the High Priest asking, “‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ And Jesus said, ‘I am’” (Mark 14:61-62; cf. Luke 22:67-71). In John 13:13 Jesus says, “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am.” These are clear affirmations by Jesus regarding his identity, unlike what we find in John 5 and John 10 where he does not affirm his opponents at all but instead calls himself the Son of God (John 10:36). One does not have to say ‘No’ to deny something. For example, if someone says, “Are you the sheriff?” and I respond, “I am a nurse,” that is essentially a denial because no one will think, “That person is probably the sheriff and a nurse!” Almost the exact same thing occurs in John 10. The Jews claim that Jesus “made himself God” (John 10:33), but Jesus replied, “I said I am the Son of God” (John 10:36).

**19) Jesus’ miracles do not prove he was God**

It is sometimes said that the miracles Jesus did prove that he was God. But almost every miracle that Jesus did on earth was done in some form by earlier prophets or by the apostles. These include healing the sick, raising the dead, multiplying food, and even walking on water. In fact, the Old Testament prophets did some amazing miracles that Jesus did not do, including splitting an ocean apart (Moses), stopping a river (Joshua), making the sun stop in the sky (Joshua), and calling down fire from heaven (Elijah). God was the one who worked the miracles through the prophets, and He worked them through Jesus also (Acts 2:22).

**20) The Trinity and the dual nature of Jesus are never called a “mystery”**

It is said that no human can understand the doctrine of the Trinity because it is a mystery. But the Bible never even uses the words “Trinity” or “dual nature” of Christ, much less defines them as mysteries. Furthermore, the Greek word *mustērion* (#3466 μυστήριον), which is translated as “mystery” in most English Bibles, does not mean “mystery” in the modern sense of the word, but rather refers to a “secret” in the religious or sacred realm. *The Emphasized Bible* by Rotherham correctly translates *mustērion* as “sacred secret.” That *mustērion* does not mean “mystery” can be documented from any number of lexicons or Bible dictionaries, and it is also clear in the Bible itself. The Bible says that many of the *mustērion* of God have now been made known, which shows that they were not actually unknowable “mysteries,” but were God’s secrets that are now revealed (e.g., Rom. 16:25, 26; 1 Cor. 2:7-10; Eph. 3:4, 5, Col. 1:26).

The reason why many English Bibles continue to translate *mustērion* as “mystery” in spite of the fact that the scholars and many clergy know that “mystery” is an inaccurate translation is due in large part to the many unbiblical and even self-contradictory doctrines that have crept into the Church over time. When even the clergy could not explain or understand these doctrines, the translation “mystery” became generally accepted because the concept of a “mystery” was a handy way to present inexplicable doctrines to the average Christian. People who challenged the inexplicable doctrines and other traditions of the Church were quickly labeled “heretics” and persecuted, so the translation “mystery” went mostly unchallenged.

Although the Bible says that certain things were secrets, like the Gentiles being included in the Church (Rom. 11:25; Eph. 3:4-6), or the way that living believers would be changed in the Rapture (1 Cor. 15:51), there is no verse that says the Trinity or the dual nature of Christ is a *mustērion* (secret). But if the doctrine of the Trinity or of the dual nature of Christ were true, we would certainly expect that the Bible would include them among God’s *mustērion*. To us, the most logical reason the Trinity and the dual nature of Christ are not referred to in the Bible as a *mustērion* (a secret) is that they are not biblical doctrines in the first place.

Not only are the Trinity and dual nature of Christ not “mysteries,” they are contradictions. Doctrinal statements such as “eternally begotten,” “three ‘Persons’ in One God,” and “Jesus is both 100% human and 100% God,” are actually just simple contradictions. This has been recognized for a very long time, and more than a hundred years ago, William G. Eliot wrote: “Mystery and contradiction are very different things. The former is something beyond our sight or seen imperfectly. The latter is plainly seen to be untrue. …we know enough to see that two contradictory statements cannot both be true. …So when Christ asserts that he did not know of a certain future event (see Mark xiii. 32), the assertion that he was nevertheless Omniscient, is evidently a denial of what he said” (*Discourses on the Doctrines of Christianity*, American Unitarian Association, Boston, 1870, p. 6).

The supposed “dual nature” of Christ is never stated in the Bible and contradicts the Bible and the laws of nature that God set up. Nothing can be 100% of two different things. Jesus cannot be 100% God and 100% man; that is not a “mystery,” it is a contradiction and nonsense talk. As was stated earlier in this appendix, the Bible clearly says in many places that Jesus Christ was a man, and the few verses that seem to say he was God are either disputed textually or can be translated and/or understood from a Biblical Unitarian perspective. Furthermore, earlier in this appendix, we saw that the miracles and amazing acts that Jesus did only showed that he walked by the power of God; he did not need to be “God in the flesh” to do them.

A fatal flaw in the “dual nature” theory is that both natures in Jesus would have had to have known about each other. Jesus’ God nature would have known about his human nature. But according to Trinitarian teaching, Jesus’ human nature knew he was God, which explains why Trinitarians say Jesus taught that he was God. But if Jesus knew he was God, then Hebrews is wrong when it says that Jesus was “made like his brothers in every respect” (Heb. 2:17). If Jesus was 100% God and 100% human at the same time, then he was not made like other humans in every way. In fact, he would have been very different from other humans in many respects. For example, in his God nature, he would not have been tempted by anything (James 1:13) but since his human nature had access to that knowledge and assurance, then his human part would not have been tempted either. But Hebrews says he was tempted in every way like we all are (Heb. 4:15). Furthermore, God does not have the problems, uncertainty, and anxieties that humans do, and if Jesus knew he was God, then he would not have had those either. Also, Luke 2:52 says Jesus grew in wisdom, but Jesus’ human part would have had access to his God part, which would have given him infinite and inherent wisdom. Also, Hebrews says Jesus “learned obedience” by the things that he suffered, but again, the human part of Jesus would have accessed the God part of him and he would not have needed to learn anything.

Kenotic Trinitarians claim that Jesus put off or limited His God nature, but that theology only developed to try to reconcile some of the verses about what Christ experienced on earth, such as we have seen in Hebrews. The idea that God can limit what He knows or experiences as God is not taught or explained in Scripture, and Kenotic Trinitarianism has been rejected by orthodox Trinitarians for exactly that reason. The very simple way to explain the “difficult verses” that Kenotic Trinitarians are trying to explain about Christ’s human experiences is to realize that Jesus was a fully human being, not both God and man at the same time.

[For more on *mustērion*, see commentary on Eph. 3:9. Some people assert we have to take the Trinity “by faith,” but that is not biblical either. For more on faith, see Appendix 2: “‘Faith’ is ‘Trust.’”]

**Conclusion**

In order to fully love and worship God and Jesus, it is important to know who they really are. God, the Father, is the Creator of the universe, the Author of the plan of Salvation, the Father of Jesus Christ, and *our* One God, and removing Him from that exalted position and having Him share His position as “God” with two other “Persons” diminishes who He really is and what He alone has done. Furthermore, making Jesus into God, instead of elevating him, actually diminishes who he was and is, and what he accomplished and is still doing. It demeans Jesus because his courage, mental tenacity, love, and great faith are unparalleled in human history. He went through life like each human does, with doubts and fears and concerns, and with the possibility of sin. His true greatness is lost if he is God, because “with God all things are possible.” Believing Jesus is God also demonstrates disbelief in Jesus’ own words when he made statements such as “the Father is greater than I” and when he prayed to the Father as “the only true God.” Also, it makes it impossible for us to identify with him and strive to be like him, for how can we ever hope to live like God?

By restoring the Father to His unique and singular position as God, He receives all the worship, credit, respect, and awe He deserves as the One True God. By restoring Christ to his position as the man approved of God—the only-begotten Son of the Father, the last Adam, the one who could have sinned but voluntarily stayed obedient, the one who could have given up but loved us so much that he never did, and the one whom God highly exalted to be our Lord—then Christ receives all the worship, credit, respect, and awe that *he* deserves, and we can draw great strength and determination from his example.

[For information on what the Holy Spirit is and that there is no third “Person” in the Trinity known as “the Holy Spirit,” see Appendix 7: “What is the Holy Spirit?” For information on verses usually used to support the doctrine of the Trinity, see the commentaries on John 8:58, 10:30, and Rom. 9:5.]

**Some very helpful books:**

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