

TITLE: Satisfaction in the Sovereign Source of Our Salvation (Part 10)

Satisfaction in the Trinity

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 1:2 and Selected Scriptures

THEME: The Doctrine of the Trinity from 1 Peter 1:2

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Time Magazine Cover Story from Jan 2005

“25 Most Infl. Evang. in Amer.” Only about 7 names on t/list of 25 were men that we would consider truly committed to t/found. truths that we hold dear.

Time ought to revise t/title of their article to, “What’s Wrong w/The American Church Today.” Or, “The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly.” I thought I’d put together my top 12 list (this is not set in stone or inspired by any means - I didn’t spend much time on it). So, off t/top of my head, here’s my Top 12 list of those men who are most influential to t/CH for the good. No particular order==>

12) Jay Sekulow (ACLJ - don’t much to fight against t/efforts of t/ACLU to erase t/influence & presence of Xnty from our nation - my theory...)

11) James Dobson - Head of FOF for many, many years & has fought against t/cultural decay in USA w/power of t/Gospel

10) & 9) Billy and Franklin Graham - No matter what you think of Billy Graham & some of t/weaknesses of his gospel presentation, there’s no debate that he has been used to lead millions to saving faith in JC & has done so w/o staining his reputation or that of JC. His son, Franklin, is heir apparent to Billy’s ministry & has served as t/president of Samaritan’s Purse, a Xn relief organization.

8) Chuck Colson - Founder and head of Prison Fellowship who seems to have moved from ecumenicism to more of a reformed outlook.

These next 7 men are particularly worthy of your attention - IOW - if you get a chance to hear them speak by way of audio or print - do it!

7) Albert Mohler - President of t/SBTS & was that schools youngest

president in its history. Dr. Mohler is a gifted speaker & theologian. He's done much to move t/SBC back to a conserv., if not even a bit of a Reformed base & since he's still quite young will make an excellent spokesman for t/CH for many years.

6) John MacArthur - who has served as Pastor-Teacher at GCC for 35 yrs. A man that most influenced me in my desire to preach God's Word w/o compromise. Over 70 books to his credit (like to write *I* some day!)

5) R.C. Sproul - 1 of my fav. theologians. Head of Ligonier Ministries & a man who has t/ability to take profound theol. concepts & bring them to t/level whereby t/avg. Xn can understand them. Over 50 books.

4) D.A. Carson - A man who may be the foremost NT scholar today who serves as professor of NT at Trinity

3) D. James Kennedy - Pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian CH in Ft. Lauderdale, hailed as t/Reformer of the Year two years ago. He continues to preach & teach w/effectiveness into his 70s.

2) John Piper - Teaching Pastor at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, MN & former professor at Bethel Sem. A man who few knew about 10 years ago & who may be t/Spurgeon of our day with his ability to paint majestic pictures of t/greatness and goodness of God w/his written and spoken words. A man who has done much to marry reformed theology w/passionate worship (cont. trad. of J. Edwards).

1) Philip E. Johnson - Who has written books such as Reason in the Balance and Darwin on Trial. Johnson was professor of Law at Berkely and for over 20 years and has led t/way for an intellectual siege against scientism by way of a thoroughly Xn worldview. FWIW - my .02 . . .

Shift our attention back to our Satisfaction in the Sovereign Source of Our Salvation, from 1 Peter 1.

Read Passage

Main idea ==>

Our Hope is Found in the Electing Grace of the Father, the Sanctifying Grace of the Spirit, and the Saving Grace of the Son.

I. Hope in The Sovereign Source of Our Salvation

A. Selected by the Father (1:2a)

B. Sanctified by the Spirit (1:2b)

C. Saved for Service by the Son (1:2c)

Father Elects; Spirit Sanctifies; Son Saves. We've said that this is a central aspect of our hope as believers==>

D. Parenthesis: Satisfaction in the Trinity

Here that we have landed for t/past 7 hours or so of our study. I firmly believe that this has been a landmark occasion in t/recent preaching ministry here at Clarkson. So many of you have responded w/positive feedback on how your thinking about God has been enriched & your appreciation for t/age-old doctrine of t/Trinity has been enlarged. I received a note last week that shows how God has been working in many of your hearts==>

“Like you have said, [the doctrine of the Trinity] is a subject that is ignored for several reasons, but . . . it is the foundation of Christianity. Even though I know the truth of the Triunity personally, I appreciate knowing how to express this fact in conversion. The Trinity was always a stumbling block in my search before becoming a Christian. Now, I have enough knowledge on the subject to be able to, hopefully, help others who struggle in this area. So, thanks for having the courage & plain good sense to address this w/all of us.”

1. I've found over past 2 + years of living in this area that not every professed Christian agrees with that sentiment

Frankly, I've been shocked at t/lack of understanding & in some cases a downright denial of t/Trinity by those who would profess to be orthodox believers in JC.

I've always appreciated the song written some 200 yrs. ago by Reginald Heber, “Holy, Holy, Holy.”

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Sev. mos. ago I mentioned this very song in a small group setting & was

absolutely blind-sided to have someone in t/group reply, “I will never sing that song!” Reason that they did not believe t/deity of JC, or t/Trinity, to be essential.

I can’t help but wonder if t/ghost of Charles Finney still walks t/ground of upstate NY spreading false doctrine like fall leaves blowing in t/wind.

Although I will say that t/CH is becoming increasingly desensitized to t/truth & cardinal doctrines like t/Trinity are openly denied by some who are considered “heroes” by many unknowing Xns. I mentioned T.D. Jakes, last week, a man who leads a CH of some 35000 near Dallas, TX & who is heard and watched on radio/TV worldwide. Can also read his books at your local Xn bookstore.

While you are at t/bookstore, you can pick up a CD featuring t/music of PCD, three oneness Pentecostal preachers who happen to sing & who also happen to deny t/Trinity (ironic that PCD consist of 3 persons). If they’re true to Oneness Pentecostalism, they also believe in baptismal regeneration & t/necessity of speaking in tongues for proof of salvation.

Another fairly well-known speaker and author, Tommy Tenney who wrote the book “God-Chasers” also denies t/Trinity. We can add some other names, such as Creflo Dollar & Rod Parsley to the list. Noteworthy that you can watch all these guys on The (ready) The Trinity Broadcasting Network! So much for integrity in advertising . . .

2. Trinity is highest revelation of who God really is

It’s based on t/principle that revelation is progressive--we see God’s trinity in a veiled/embryonic form in t/OT & in a more complete form in t/NT. It’s also based on that grand theological principle that I shared last week: God is smarter & greater than we are. While it is (I’ve avoided this word, but I guess I’ll use it) a mystery, or enigmatic, it is not a contradiction. Also not a take-it-or-leave-it tenet of t/faith. It is essential to embrace doctrine of Trinity if we are going to embrace God

in who He is. HS sov. reveals this doctrine to whom He wills.

Wresting w/this & coming to understand it is part of our discipleship, our learning; Rem. “To fail to learn is to learn to fail”

If our Hope is Found in the Triune God then we must know and love Him in His Triunity.

If we must know and love Him in His Triunity then we must know about His Triunity.

If we must know and love Him in His Triunity then we must believe in His Triunity.

3. Hairsplitting or Heresy? (Arianism and Modalism & Confusion, Oh My!)

a. For time's sake

I'm not going to address Arianism (which was an early form of Watchtowerism that was officially condemned by the CH in the 4th c. If you want a review of that particular heresy I suggest you get the tape on parts 5 and 6 where I cover some of t/historical and biblical aspects related to t/divinity of JC.

b. Modalism/Sebellianism/Modalistic monarchianism/ Jesus Only/ Oneness/Patrispassionism

This is a common view that denies t/Trinity by claiming that t/difference between t/Father, Son, HS is one of different manifestations of t/Father. Some of these false teachers contended t/3 aspects of God reflect three ages (F = OT; Son = Gospels; HS = Acts forward). Modalism denies a distinction of persons in t/Godhead. Rem. our definition: “God is one as to essence and three as to person.” According to Modalism, or Oneness theology, God is one as to essence and one as to person. The difference between t/F/S/HS is a matter of One God playing 3 different roles, like an actor changing between three different characters.

(1) Origin of this heresy goes back to a man by the name

of Sabellius (back in the early 3d century) in Rome

Actually goes back a little before that w/men in Asia Minor by name of Praxeas and Noetus, but Sabellius was t/one who really pushed t/movt. forward.

Sabellius claimed that t/Father himself is t/Son who took on flesh and also t/Holy Sprit who gives life & holiness. [Aquinas, 65]

It was a godly man by name of Tertullian, t/CH father from N. Africa who vigorously opposed Sabellius & Sabellianism was roundly condemned by t/CH as heresy, culminating at t/Councils of Nicea in 325, Constantinople in 381, and Chalcedon in 451.

(2) False teaching is like a bad cold==>

<==you just can't seem to shake it! So while it may have persisted on a small scale over t/centuries, it wasn't until 100 yrs. ago that it really became a big issue again - at least that's true in t/US.

At t/turn of t/20th c. t/Assemblies of God found themselves in a bit of controversy over t/Trinity. About 25% of their pastors were modalists (they had bought t/heresy of Sabellius that there was no distinction of persons in t/Godhead and thus no Trinity). To their credit, AG addressed t/issue, stood their ground & booted 150 of their pastors from t/group. This is basically the background to the Modern Oneness Movement (1914) which eventually became the United Pentecostal Church. UPC isn't t/only Oneness denomination, it is t/largest. Unfort., these perversions of t/Triunity are not limited to any 1 or more denominations. Modalistic views on t/Trinity have found their way into all segments of Xnty, being espoused by laymen and leader alike. Seems to be a movt. that has grown of late, esp. in light of t/fact that t/CH has lost its interest in caring about theology & biblical truth. So while t/shepherds have been sleeping, the wolves have infiltrated t/sheepfold.

(3) This is by No Means a Monolithic Movement

There are some differences between those who consider themselves oneness in theology. What they all have in common, however, is a denial of t/Trinity, or a re-definition of it which, in reality, is a denial.

David K. Bernard, perhaps t/most prolific oneness writer==>

“The Bible does not teach the doctrine of the trinity, and Trinitarianism actually contradicts the Bible. It does not add any positive benefit to the Christian message. . . the doctrine of the trinity does detract from the important biblical themes of the oneness of God and the absolute deity of Jesus Christ.” [Oneness writer, David K. Bernard, cited in “The Trinity, the Definition of Chalcedon, and Oneness Theology” by James White]

Bernard goes on to say==>

“If there is only one God and that God is the Father (Mal. 2:10), and if Jesus is God, then it logically follows that Jesus is the Father.” [David Bernard, cited in Boyd, 28]

I have actually read a Oneness author who denied that Jesus was t/Father. I thought to myself, “*Hmmm. self, this is interesting, I wonder what he means?*” I found out a little later that what he meant was that t/humanity of Jesus isn’t t/Father, but t/divinity of Jesus is. Political double-speak.

(4) Here’s the key for modalists:

Distinction between Jesus’ humanity & deity (his 2 natures) is t/same as t/distinction between t/Father & t/Son. So, for X to be fully God & fully man means that he is fully t/Father & fully t/Son. Which is, as we will see, a perversion of t/incarnation & thus t/atonement.

(a) Can look at it this way

In orthodox theology we talk about JCt being t/eternal SOG. IOW - He was, is, always will be God t/Son, t/2d person of t/Trinity. 2k yrs. ago (Gal. 4:4) he took on flesh and became man, Fully God & fully Man.

Oneness proponents believe that Jesus is t/non-eternal SOG in that t/Son began at t/incarnation when t/Father became man.

The “Son” is the flesh, t/”Father” is t/God – & t/God (t/Father) took on flesh, & in effect became his own Son.

(b) So Jesus Christ is BOTH the Father and the Son

He is t/Father in His Deity & t/Son in His humanity. Being both F & S, J. could alternate between his 2 natures. This, for modalists, is how you understand t/”difficult” Scriptures.

Sometimes J. is acting as t/Son (man) & sometimes as t/Father (God). When you see Jesus acting or speaking, according to Oneness writers, t/exegetical or interpretational key is asking t/? “Is he acting as t/Father or as t/Son (God or a man)?

In t/Garden of Gethsamane, when Jesus prayed to t/Father he was acting in t/role of t/Son (man). When he raised Lazarus from t/dead, he was acting in t/role of t/Father (God).

When he was hungry or thirsty or tired, that was Jesus acting as t/Son. When he performed miracles or forgave sin, he was acting as t/Father.

Oneness theologians will even admit that Jesus sometimes morphed back and forth between his 2 roles in t/same passage or even verse.

The problem is that this portrays Jesus as a Jekyll& Hyde character who could sleep 1 moment because his humanity was tired, then calm a raging storm t/next, acting, now, not as t/Son, but as t/Father.

This is in contradiction to orthodoxy which has historically maintained that Jesus has two natures but acts as one person.

So, as crazy as it sounds, Jesus was & is both t/Father who loved & sent his Son & t/Son who loved & obeyed t/Father. He was both t/Son who prayed to t/Father & t/Father who answered t/Son. He was both t/man who was forsaken at t/cross & t/God who appeared to forsake t/man.

(c) Here is the issue & the error

Relationship between t/Father & t/Son is not a relationship between the two natures of one person. Jesus wasn't a schizoid who had two natures w/i him communicating to one another. In fact, natures don't communicate; persons do! Yet, for those who hold to modalism, Jesus becomes two persons w/i himself (ancient heresy of Nestorianism).

(5) Because this modalistic view denies that there are three persons who are God it also denies that any but the Father pre-existed in eternity

IOW - Only One God & Only One Person. Since t/Father became incarnated in t/Son, Son didn't exist until that first Christmas 2k yrs. ago. They also contend that JC role as t/Son will someday end when all things are delivered over to t/Father that God be all in all. So JC as t/SOG is a temporal, not an eternal role.

CH t/o its history has taught & believed that the X is the eternal SOG (eternal sonship). The relationship between t/three members of t/Trinity is eternal in nature.

If fact, if X isn't eternally t/Son then t/Father is not eternally the Father. Fatherhood requires Sonship. If Jesus is not t/eternal Son, then t/Father is not t/eternal Father, but a singular monad who become t/Father. Can't have it both ways. Can't have a temporal Son and an Eternal Father. They both stand or fall together & this is one reason why theologians believe that these are eternal relationships.

(a) Go back to the Exodus

Three Persons of the One Essence of God who deliver Israel from Egypt: God (Father), the Angel of God (Son), and the Spirit of God (HS) - Exo. chapters 3, 23, 32 and Isa. 63).

(b) We've talked about the Plural Pronouns used in the

Book of Genesis for Example

Gen.1:26 (let us make man in our own image)

Gen. 3:22 (man, in knowing good and evil has become like us)

Gen. 11:7 (let us go down and confuse their language)

Indicates a distinction of persons and if one of those persons is JC then he obv. existed before His incarnation.

(c) Redundancy of the name YHWH in Gen. 19:24==>

Then the \Lord\ rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the \Lord\ out of heaven,

(d) Psalm 110:1 (Messianic Psalm)

The \Lord\ says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet."

You might remember that Jesus asked the Pharisees about t/ramifications of this Psalm in Matt. chapter 22. Jesus asked those Pharisees who were gathered around Him, "What do you think about the Christ [Messiah], whose son is He?" They replied, "The son of David."

The Scriptures taught that Messiah would be the son of David, which simply means that Messiah would be of Davidic Ancestry (true). Jesus fulfilled that, of course. But, the Jews expected the Messiah to be a mere man, a superman of sorts, but a mere man. Certainly not God.

So Jesus asks them another question: "Then how does David in the Spirit call him, that is the Messiah, 'Lord,' saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Until I put Thine enemies beneath Thy feet"' "If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?"

IOW - if the Messiah is no more than the human son of David, why would David use a divine name in referring to him as "my Lord?"

Matthew concludes the story by saying that==>

no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on

to ask Him another question.

Point is, you have two persons here.

The \Lord\ says to my Lord:

Or we could paraphrase the thought as,

“God the Father said to God the Son” "Sit at My right hand, Until I make
Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet

(e) Angel of the LORD

The Angel of the Lord is a person who appears in the OT. Lit. “The Angel of YHWH.” We see that this messenger is no mere angel. He receives worship, He speaks for God and as God. He is even called God.

We see the Angel of the Lord for 1st time in Gen. 16 following Hagar’s banishment from t/presence of Sarah. TAL encourages Hagar & tells her that her descendants will one day be too many to count. After this encounter it says in v. 13 that Hagar called the name of the LORD who spoke to her “Thou art a God who sees” for “Have I remained alive after seeing Him?”

This is what we call a Theophany or a Christophany. This is an appearance of God, or more specifically Christ, in tangible form.

It was TAL who stopped Abraham from offering up his son, Isaac, in Gen. 22. TAL is there identified as being YHWH or Jehovah.

It was TAL who appeared as a burning bush before Moses in Exo. 3:2. Again, not an angel, but God Himself.

Yet, while TAL is clearly Jehovah God, he is sometimes distinguished as 2 persons w/i t/essence of the one God.

ZEC 1:12 (a vision of Zechariah) . . . the angel of the LORD . . . said, "O LORD of hosts, how long wilt Thou have no compassion for Jerusalem and

the cities of Judah. . .

ZEC 3:1-2 (another vision of Zechariah) Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?"

BTW - TAL ceases to appear after incarnation of JC which leads me to believe that TAL was what we call a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ.

(f) Psalm 45:6-7 and Hebrews 1:8-9

PSA 45:6-7 Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness; Therefore God, Thy God, has anointed Thee

Who's being referred to here? "Your throne O God is forever Therefore God, your God has anointed you."

The writer to the Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 1:8-9==>

But of t/Son He says, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, And t/righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee

Not only do we see that the Son is eternal, but also that He is God the Son who is distinct in person from God the Father.

I see all three eternal persons of the Trinity in one OT passage Isa. 48:16.

I believe that Jesus is speaking here in the first person.

"Come near to Me, listen to this: From the first I have not spoken in secret, From the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit."

(g) Daniel 7 and Colossians 1 and Philipians 2

You have the Son of Man who comes to the Ancient of Days in Dan. 7 (clearly the pre-existent X before the Father)

You have Colossians 1:15-17 which says that the Son was the agent of creation – the One who created all things & if that's true then he pre-

existed.

You have Phil. 2 (Kenosis Passage) which claims that JC pre-existed in the very μορφη of God.

(h) You have several passages in John's Gospel

In John 6 Jesus refers to himself as the Bread of life that comes from the Father. After t/Jews complained about what Jesus was saying, He replied in v. 62==>

"What then if you should behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before?"

JOH 13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God, and was going back to God,

JOH 16:28 "I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again, and going to the Father."

JOH 17:5 "And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.

Also add Isaiah 6

John 8:58 "Before Abraham was Born, I AM"

(cf. Jn 12:41)

Last, but not least, the Prologue to John's Gospel which we will look at more closely next week, which is an exegetical slam dunk against both Arianism and Oneness denials of the Trinity.

(6) How do modalists address this evidence?

Some claim that God was working through his foreknowledge. For example, passages that speak of JC as t/Creator, such as John 1, Colossians 1, mean that, though Jesus didn't exist, the Father created the world, "with a view towards" or "for the sake of" JC.

In other passages, such as John 8:58, they go back to their "key" - the two communicating natures w/i X and claim that when Jesus said "Before Abraham was born, I AM" this was t/Father speaking, not t/Son.

I'm going to ask for your patience for one more week

I fully intended to finish this series this am & I hate to break this part up. It's so imp. that you hear all of this and get t/big picture. But I didn't want to gloss over anything either, so we will finish up next week.

We have several more points that are akin to screws & so I want to screw the truth into your minds as it relates to why this issue is so central to our faith.

5. The Contribution of John chapter 1

6. So What? What Difference Does It Make?

- a. Nature of God (as to His Essence & As to the Two Natures of Christ, his deity and his humanity)**
- b. The Nature of Revelation (Is God who He says He is, or just an actor wearing a mask?)**
- c. The Nature of Relationships and Fellowship w/i the Godhead**
- d. The Nature of the Atonement**

7. Why We Should Love and Embrace the Trinity

This is no insignificant issue; it touches upon the nature of God, the incarnation, and even t/sufficiency of t/person of JC in his role as Savior.

That's where it all begins and ends. I trust that you know God, not only in t/truth of His triunity, but also in his mission as savior of the world.

Can't separate t/truth of who God is (Trinity) from t/Gospel. It is

inseparably part of t/faith “once for all delivered from t/saints.”

Jesus is referred to as “The Son” over 200 x in t/NT and never once referred to as “The Father.” Over 200 x “The Father” is referred to by Jesus or someone else as being clearly distinct from Jesus. Over 50 x the juxtaposition of Jesus and the Father is found in the same verse (Rom. 15:5-6; Phil. 2:10-11). [Boyd, 68]

(c) Problem Passages (dealing with the main three)

Isaiah 9:6 - everlasting father means that Jesus is the father. It may be referring to the “fatherhood” of Jesus, which does mean that he is “The father.” 2) never hinge a doctrine on one verse (cf. 1 Cor. 15:29) - especially when the concept isn’t taught elsewhere. Isaiah’s use of the Heb. term “Ab” really has nothing to do w/the NT use of t/term; “Father” wasn’t a std. title for God in t/OT & wasn’t extensively used by t/Jews until later. Probably could be better translated “Father of eternity” - implying his role as creator, the Lord of time and eternity. This would not be a verse, everything considered, that you would appeal to prove that Jesus is same person as t/Father.

John 14:7-10 - This is consistent with John 1:18. Jesus and the Father are one (John 10:30) in the sense of one God (not two). Cf. John 14:6 and t/distinction of persons.

How would t/disciples have understood this? If I was talking to someone and I said regarding a family business transaction, “I can’t make a decision until I clear it with my father.” and then someone asked, “can we meet your father?” and I reply, “Hey, if you’ve seen me you’ve seen my father” they aren’t going to think I’m my own father, they’re going to think that we are much alike in our nature. Same thing (def. of t/Trinity - 1 as to essence/nature - 3 as to person).

One verse int/middle of Jn. can’t overwrite the entirety of t/Gospel, much less t/Bible. (Cf. John 14:10-13) - Isn’t saying that the Father is

in the father? Note the connection of the context to vv. 7-10. Look at the rest of the Gospel ==> J. comes in t/F. name, does his works (John 5:43; 10:25; 14:10; 17:26), teaches t/things of t/Father and testifies to Him (John 7:16; 8:28; 14:24), receives all things from t/F. and submits to t/F. autho. (John 5:19, 30; 8:28-29; 15:10), and intercedes for us before t/F. (17:1ff.). Could it be any clearer that Jesus and the Father are distinct persons?

John 10:30 - 1st person neuter plural of εἶμι - we are one in essence; so this verse supports trinitarianism. Masc. would imply one in ID, neuter one in essence. "God is one as to essence, three as to person." Also a wonderful Jewish/OT twist to this. OT required that at least two persons serve as witnesses to legal matters (John 8:17; Num. 35:30; Detu. 17:6; Matt. 18:16)/ Yet, Jesus says that both He and His father who sent him can testify as witnesses to the authenticity of his ministry (John 8:16-18; 5:31-32). Note also Jesus' baptism and the transfiguration. This testimony dissolves if there is no distinction of persons.

Oneness writers have picked up on this and claim that the two witnesses are the two natures of Jesus. Try that in court sometime. Judge: so, you claim you are innocent. Do you have any witnesses?" Reply, "Your honor, I do. My body and my spirit both testify that I am not guilty."

(4) Issues of Christology in the Trinity

One person, therefore, the humanity and divinity of Christ cannot be separated, or isolated. Jesus does not cut and dry operate out of one or the other (i.e. he forgives sin solely in his deity, he weeps solely in his humanity). The entire person does these things as one. What about his death on the cross? Did God die? Did all of God die? Isn't JC all of God.

The God-man died on the cross as a person. Death is separation, not cessation of existence. Jesus, as the 2nd person of the Trinity was, momentarily, spiritually separated from the Godhead, although

ontologically, he remained an inseparable part of it.

“A belief in the incarnation means that everything Christ went through and did, God went through and did; otherwise it is a meaningless belief. The one person for Jesus Christ cannot be split in two . . .” [Boyd, 58]

When Jesus suffered, God experienced suffering. When Jesus was hungry, God experienced hunger and when Jesus experienced death, God experienced death. [Boyd, 58]

“The Oneness insistence that it was not as God, but only as a man, that Christ did these things splits Christ in two and is tantamount to denying the incarnation altogether.” [Boyd, 58-59] “. . . to affirm that ‘the Word became flesh’ either means that what the man Jesus experiences, God experiences—or it means nothing at all. If Jesus the dependent man is not in fact God experiencing human dependency on the independent Father, in what sense did the Word really become flesh? And if Jesus the praying man is to in fact God as a man praying to God, in what sense did God really become a man? Either God became a man or he did not; if he did, then everything that the man Jesus does, God does. This is why Christians have always called him ‘the God-man.’ To assert anything less—like sometimes Jesus is ‘acting like’ a man and sometimes ‘acting like’ God—is to assert something far less than what John 1:14 affirms: ‘The Word became flesh . . .’” [Boyd, 65]

Did all of God “die?” The second person died as the God-man. While Jesus is 100% God, He is not all of the Godhead?

“A trinitarian person is not so comprehensive as the Godhead, because he does not possess the personal characteristics belonging to the other two persons. He is the essence with one personal peculiarity, while the Godhead is the essence with three personal peculiarities. A trinitarian person includes all that is in the unity, but not all that is in the trinity of God; all that is in the essence, but not all that is in the three modes of the essence.”

“A trinitarian person is the entire divine nature subsisting in a particular manner, namely, as Father or as Son or as Holy Spirit.” [Shedd, 233]

God can be in a billion places at once, but he is not a billion gods, he is one God. God can indwell a million Xns at the same time, but he is not a million gods, he is one God. ISW - God can subsist as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and yet be one God, not three gods.

“There are many illustrations which have been offered to help us understand the Trinity. While there are some illustrations which are helpful, we should recognize that no illustration is perfect. Unfortunately, there are many illustrations which are not simply imperfect, but in error. One illustration to beware of is the one which says "I am one person, but I am a student, son, and brother. This explains how God can be both one and three." The problem with this is that it reflects a heresy called *modalism*. God is not one person who plays three different roles, as this illustration suggests. He is one Being in three Persons (centers of consciousness), not merely three roles. This analogy ignores the personal distinctions within God and mitigates them to mere roles.” [desiring God website]

Patripassionism in our prayers “Father we thank you for dying on the cross for our sin.”

“The fatal shortcoming of modalism is the fact that it must deny the personal relationships within the Trinity that appear in so many places in Scripture . . . it must deny three separate persons at the baptism of Jesus, where the Father speaks from heaven and the Spirit descends on Jesus like a dove. And it must say that all those instances where Jesus is praying to the Father are an illusion or a charade. The idea of the Son or the Holy Spirit interceding for us before God the Father is lost. Finally,

modalism ultimately loses the heart of the doctrine of the atonement—that is, the idea that God sent His Son as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that the Son bore the wrath of God in our place, and that the Father, representing the interests of the Trinity, saw the suffering of Christ and was satisfied (Isa. 53:11). Moreover, modalism denies the independence of God, for if God is only one person, then he has no ability to love and to communicate with other persons in his creation. Therefore, it was necessary for God to create the world and God would no longer be independent of creation.” [Grudem, 242]

Speaking of Oneness Pentecostals (specifically, the UPC), Wayne Grudem writes: “because of [their] denial of the three distinct persons in God, [they] should not be considered evangelical, and it is doubtful whether [they] should be considered genuinely Christian at all.” [Grudem, 243 fn.]

(1) The Contribution of John chapter 1

1:1-18 is a prologue to the entire Gospel and all orthodox theologians, exegetes, and expositors agree that this passage w/o question proves t/deity and preexistence of the second person of the Trinity.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The Grk. word that’s translated the “Word” is *logos*. This verse is saying that the *Logos* was with God and was God. (modalists will claim that the *logos* isn’t a person, but an idea or concept, which is laughable, cf. vv. 2, 3, 4, 10-12, 14.

JWs claim that this verse should be transl. . . . even tho no reputable Gk. scholar agrees. But the wording, as inspired by t/HS, is perfectly succinct. Word order in English and in Greek . . . Lit. in t/Gk. text, *καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος*. (and God was the Word). We have what is called a predicate nominative construction, the passage is telling us what the

Word (nominative/subject) is like as to nature (here, God). We know that “The Word” is the subject, because it has the Gk. def. article. But in the Grk. we ask why is it in the order [^]? and why does the word “God” not have the definite article?

The word order makes the statement emphatic/emphasis. It points to essence or quality nature. IOW - the statement is telling us that, “What God was, the Word also was.” Why does the phrase not have the definite article, IOW, and “the God was the Word.” ?? The lack of the definite article is to keep us from equating the person of who God is, the Father, with the person of who the Word is, The Son. IOW - The word order tells us that JC has all of the essential attributes of the Father, the lack of the article tells us that he is not the same person as the Father. Our definition? “God is one as to essence, three as to person.”

As the great reformer Martin Luther remarked: “The lack of an article is against Seballianism (modalism), the word order is against Arianism (watchtowerism).” [cited by Daniel Wallace in Mounce, Basics of Biblical Greek, 29]

Other places where “God” doesn’t have the article and yet NWT translates it “God” not “a god.”

2 He was in the beginning with God.

προς always denotes relationship w/someone. [Beisner, 21] (προς also used in v. 1).

“St. John does not, here, say that the Logos was the Godhead or the Trinity, but that he was divine. Hence, *theos* is anarthrous (1) to denote divine nature in the abstract (cf. anarthrous *pneuma* in John 4:24) and (2) in order not to confound the person of the Logos with that of the Father, who in the preceding clause is designate by *theion* with the article. When the Father or Son or Spirit is denominated *theos*, the word is used in the sense of deity, not of Trinity.” [Shedd, 240]

The JW interpretation is not followed by any recognized Gk. scholar. It is commonly known that the structure follows a regular rule of Gk. Grammar known as “Colwell’s Rule”. The absence of the article shows that the word θεος is the predicate, rather than the subject, of the sentence. [Grudem, 234] Note that the word lacks the article in other places in the chapter, such as vv. 6,12,13,18. If JW were consistent they would have to translate ea. as “a god” but even in their “bible” they do not.

Other common oneness beliefs (tongues/baptismal regeneration). Jesus only as to baptism in t/”Name”

c. Four essential affirmations of an orthodox understanding of the person of Jesus Christ

(1) HIS FULL AND TRUE DEITY

100% God, Coequal w/the Father and the Holy Spirit.

(2) HIS FULL AND TRUE HUMANITY

100% man, perfect and w/o sin. Jesus Christ was tempted in all things, and yet lived a perfect and sinless life (Hebrews 4:15). He fulfilled all righteousness (Matthew 3:15; John 4:34, 8:29); He could not be charged with any sin (John 8:46); and those who knew Him testified of His sinlessness (1 John 3:5; 1 Peter 2:22). His sinlessness confirmed His deity, made His sacrifice perfect, and secured His eternal priesthood (Hebrews 7:26-27).

(3) ONE COMPLETE PERSON

Not two persons in one, but one person, the God-man, Jesus Christ. Not a split personality working as God one moment and man the next. We

must not attribute an action of X to one nature or the other: “He wept in his humanity, he forgave sin in his deity.” He was one person and acted as one person.

(4) TWO NATURES

Two distinct natures, fully God and fully man.

5. So What? What Difference Does It Make?

Why is it important to understand what it means to worship a triune God? The Trinity is first of all important because God is important. To understand more fully what God is like is a way of honoring God. Further, we should allow the fact that God is triune to deepen our worship. We exist to worship God. And God seeks people to worship Him in "spirit and truth" (John 4:24). Therefore we must always endeavor to deepen our worship of God--in truth as well as in our hearts.

The Trinity also has a very significant application to prayer. The general pattern of prayer in the Bible is to pray to the Father through the Son and in the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:18). Our fellowship with God should be enhanced by consciously knowing that we are relating to a tri-personal God!

Awareness of the distinct role that each Person of the Trinity has in our salvation can especially serve to give us greater comfort and appreciation for God in our prayers, as well as helping us to be specific in directing our prayers. Nonetheless, while recognizing the distinct roles that each Person has, we should never think of their roles as so separate that the other Persons are not involved. Rather, everything that one Person is involved in, the other two are also involved in, one way or another. [above from the Desiring God website]

a. Nature of God

(1) As to His Essence (who He is as God)

An Actor Wearing Three Masks (hypocrite). If God is just appearing in three manifestations, we have to ask, “Will the real God please stand?” (like the old game show, To Tell the Truth). One oneness writer, “All visible projections of God to the eyes are manifestations of God and not God’s original nature that is seen, [Reeves, Dimensions, 37, as cited by Boyd, 180]. One wonders how anything can be a genuine manifestation of God if it isn’t a genuine manifestation of his original nature? Where is t/original God? God ends up being an illusion, a hologram that looks like something it isn’t. It’s hard to see how, in the modalistic view of things, God isn’t just a deception. At least one oneness writer admits the illusion, when commenting on Rev. chaps. 4 and 5 and the picture John paints of God on the throne and the lamb next to it, he calls the two ‘persons’ “two roles performed by God” and how Jesus can occasionally “project” the Father as though he looked to be distinct from himself, even though this isn’t really true. [Boyd, 182].

Denial of the incarnation and a retread of Nestorianism and Apollinarianism

Acts 20:28.

(2) As to the Nature of Christ and His human and divine will (Chalcedon)

See Chalcedon statement . . .

b. The Nature of Revelation

c. The Nature of Relationship

Love becomes an illusion.

A leading oneness proponent writes:

“John 3:35, 5:20, and 15:9 state that the Father loves the Son . . . and John 17:24 says the Father loved Jesus before the foundation of the world. In John 14:31 Jesus expresses love for the Father . . . All of these statements do not mean separate persons. . . .What these verses express is the relationship between the two natures of Christ. The Spirit of Jesus loved the humanity and vice versa. . . remember, the Son came to the world to show us how much God loves us and also to be our example. For these two objectives to be achieved, the Father and the Son showed love for each other.” [Bernard, Oneness, 186, cited in Boyd, 183]

Speaking of relationships - has been said that God had to create in order to experience fellowship and love. Cuts against the perfection of God and makes him dependent in his creation. There was eternally love and fellowship w/I the Trinity.

Attribute of God as love requires the Trinity - If God is love, there has to be someone who is loving, someone who is being loved, and a spirit of love - Augustine [SWC notes]

1 John 4:8 states that God is love (part of his nature). How could God have been love if for all eternity there was no one for him to love? Idea of relationship become lost in a sterile monad. If modalists are right, then 1 John 4:8 should have been “God became love.” Man created in the image of God means that man is relational. There is a social aspect of man that evidences itself in the CH and in Family and in our love relationships. We are never complete in solitude. Yet, the Bible teaches that God is essentially and eternally loving, as well as essentially and eternally a God of fellowship. But these things cannot exist if there is no Trinity; at least not until God created.

Would be no eternal fellowship apart from the Trinity. Sometimes

inquiring minds ask, “What was God doing before He created the world?”

John 17:5 “And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.

John 17:24 “Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world.

Before the world was, before any creative activity (angels or otherwise), the F/S/HS enjoyed unbroken and harmonious fellowship in perfect love.

Implication as to our fellowship as believers -
John 17 (cf. Phil. 2:1ff.).

d. The Nature of the Atonement

Modalistic interpretation destroys the NT revelation of the pain the Father experienced in the sacrifice of JC. Cf. Rom. 8:32 and John 3:16. Yet, for oneness people, the “Son” isn’t a person, it’s a nature, or a human body. How emotionally attached can one become to a nature or a body?

Rather, what JC endured, the totality of the Godhead endured. The fullness of the Godhead was in Christ (Col. 2:9).

Modalism divides X into two persons, making his two natures (human and divine) essentially two different persons (they talk to each other). They also contend that when JC died, only his humanity died; that is, he died as a man, not as God. As theologian E. Calvin Beisner writes:

“By denying that Christ died for men’s sins as God (not merely as man), Oneness theology implies an atonement and redemption inadequate for man’s salvation, for: 1) No other sacrifice would be adequate to pay the infinite debt for man’s sin, for no other sacrifice would have been of infinite value. It is impossible for a mere human to make full atonement and ransom for sin; God must do it (Ps. 49:7-9, 15). 2) Therefore, it was essential that the one who died as a ransom and satisfaction for man’s sins be both human (to represent human beings properly; 1 Tim. 2:5; Rom. 5:12-19) and God. 3) Any other redeemer would put people in debt and servitude to someone other than God, for we belong to whoever redeems us (1 Cor. 6:19-20; see also 7:22-23; Rev. 5:9).” [E. Calvin Beisner, Jesus Only Churches, 16]

Acts 20:28.

What about “begotten?” What about eternal sonship (Grudem, page 250; White article, page 6ff. and page 12ff.)?

6. Why We Should Love and Embrace the Trinity

James White’s book “Loving the Trinity” - excellent example of what our perspective should be. Trinity not a sterile concept, but a person who is to be loved according to knowledge, Trinity is the highest revelation of God re: himself.