

AN ESSAY AND TREATMENT ON THE DOCTRINE OF  
**THE PERSONHOOD OF GOD**

*AND*

A REFUTATION OF THE AFFIRMATION BY  
THE REVERED BAPTIST THEOLOGIAN JOHN GILL FROM HIS WRITING:  
**“The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated”**  
(London, 1731)

*and in particular his*

**“BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY  
Book 1—Chapter 27  
OF A PLURALITY IN THE GODHEAD;  
OR, A TRINITY OF PERSONS  
IN THE UNITY OF THE DIVINE ESSENCE.”**

*John Gill was the first major writing Baptist theologian, his work retaining influence into the 21st century. Gill's relationship with hyper-Calvinism in English Baptist life is a matter of debate. Peter Toon has argued that Gill was himself a hyper-Calvinist, which would make Gill the father of Baptist hyper-Calvinism. However, Tom Nettles and Timothy George have argued that Gill was not a hyper-Calvinist. Gill's works are still highly regarded by Primitive Baptists and related groups.*

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## Introduction

The research done here is with basic tools of Bible study that any common man can get a hold of and put to use: The KJV, Old Testament Word Study dictionaries, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, The 1689 Baptist Confession, and the "esword" Bible on computer for convenience. I have purposely stayed away from trying to translate and transliterate the Hebrew language. I am not a Hebrew or Greek scholar. I have made the observation after looking at many translators' texts through the years that *their* original texts to me always seem biased according to the predisposition of that translator. I'm sure there are no flaws in the original manuscripts and I'm also sure that the more human intelligence is applied, the more likely that the human curse will infiltrate and cause confusion.

Considering the facts that The Lord has allowed so many Christians to suffer and die in the attempts to have the manuscripts and early translations translated and published in the languages of the world to the common elect, and considering that the interpretation of tongues is said in Scripture to be a gift to some individuals and not to the common elect as a whole -I just don't believe it's necessary in our day to be a Hebrew or Greek scholar in order to understand His Word. Certainly there are issues and doctrines which we can -and do- come to a deeper understanding of by in-depth study, this is precisely why we teach. Many have invested their lives and many will invest the remainder of our lives trying to get people to simply read and study The Bible for themselves.

The bottom line here is that Scripture is to be evaluated under the leadership of The Holy Spirit of God, by born-again Christians. I don't trust scholars and philosophers. Between 1995 and 2005 I read dozens of them and became disillusioned with and disappointed in them; I just stopped reading them. The dogma is always the same using the same texts and having the same outcome; I've rarely heard a "scholar" repent. In my personal studies I agree with some and disagree with others. While on the other hand some are so obviously twisted that I feel dirty inside from the study. I've seen many common saved folks come to repentance and greater understanding through grace than what I've read of philosophers through intelligence.

I realize that reference books are not inspired of God, I'm aware of the issues with the KJV being a translation itself and I know that we won't be able to understand all the issues completely "until we get there". However, the child of God should be able and willing to defend The Faith that The Lord has taught which will be irrefutably supported by Scripture. I believe there's a lot to be said for: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." (John 7:16)

I'm persuaded that there must be a combination of regeneration, faithful service, and honest studies in a person's life to understand Bible doctrine. I have a persuasion on the topic of this study that I hope to faithfully convey. In my experience, very few Trinitarians actually know what they believe or how to explain it theologically; therefore I have used a well-known and educated theologian to express the Trinitarian viewpoint to you -and for me dissect here for you. The following is, in my view, a reasonably detailed, 46-point answer to the common affirmation of this Trinitarian point of view taken from the 18th century pastor, John Gill. His "BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY", Book 1—Chapter 27: "OF A PLURALITY IN THE GODHEAD; OR, A TRINITY OF PERSONS IN THE UNITY OF THE DIVINE ESSENCE" is a foundational work for the modern doctrine of the Trinity. Gill's argument is a very good demonstration of the argument all Trinitarians make, though they may not -and usually don't know, that this is the full theological stance. Following you will find the Trinitarian affirmation first and then the denial. Their affirmation is that there is a plurality of persons in a Godhead; I present a denial and affirm One God -One Person.

**Gill, Point 1:** The Hebrew word "Mynp" which answers to the Greek word "proswpa", is used of the divine persons; "My *persons* shall go with thee", (Ex.. 33:14) and if "Kynp", "thy *persons* go *not* with me, (Ex.. 33:15) and "he brought thee out 'by his persons'", (Deut. 4:37). The word is used three times in (Ps. 27:8, 9) and in each clause the Septuagint (Greek translation of the OT) has the word "proswpon", which is expressive of the sacred Trinity. That there is such a plurality of persons..."

**MY NOTE 1:** Gill translates the Hebrew to Greek and *then* to English. This immediately opens me up to all sorts of assumptions about his motive.

**MY NOTE 2:** In all four of the texts referenced, this Hebrew word is "A Plural, masculine noun but always used as a singular; meaning -the *face*." The singular word, "face", should replace Gill's plural word, "persons". In a reasonable search I can't find the place where he got, "persons". This Hebrew word is used 625 times in the Pentateuch alone, always singular and always meaning, "face". However I do see how that translating from a

monotheistic religion's view (Hebrew) *through* a polytheistic religion's view (Greek) and then into English surely could cause this confusion, surely this plays a part in why they translated from the Septuagint (Greek translation of the OT) when the original language was Hebrew.

**Gill, Point 1a:** God's great name "Jehovah" is always singular and is never used plurally; the reason for which is, because it expresses his essence, which is but one; it is the same with "I AM that I AM"; *but* the first name of God we meet with in the first verse of Scripture, is plural; "In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heaven and the earth" and therefore must design more than one, at least two, and yet not precisely two, or two only; then it would have been dual; but it is plural; and, as the Jews themselves say, cannot design fewer than three. Now Moses might have made

use of other names of God, in his account of the creation; as well as his name "Jehovah", by which he made himself known to him, and to the people of Israel; or Eloah, the singular of Elohim, which is used by Moses, (Deut. 32:15, 16) and in the book of Job frequently; so that it was not want of singular names of God, nor the barrenness of the Hebrew language, which obliged him to use a plural word; it was no doubt of choice, and with design; and which will be more evident when it is observed, that one end of the writings of Moses is to extirpate the polytheism of the heathens, and to prevent the people of Israel from going into it; and therefore it may seem strange, that he should begin his history with a plural name of God..."

**MY NOTE 3:** The problem is not in the nature of God, it's in the translation of the languages and the predisposition of the writer. The dictionary says, "*Plural of H433*"; which only says, "*from H410; a deity or the deity*", which then says, "*strength*", especially the Almighty: - God, great, idol, might (-y one), power, strong. Which leads us to 352 which also says strength, and then takes us to H193 which says, "*From an unused root meaning to twist, that is, (by implication) be strong; the body (as being rolled together) also powerful: - mighty*". SO-- the issue carries the idea of "strength existing because of a plurality of elements being 'rolled together' ". This leads back to the question of whether or not God is a number of "persons", or whether He is a number of "elements", which, due to the fact that they are "rolled together", constitute strength. Does this mean that God is strong because He is a number of persons or because he is a number of elements? He is a vast number of elements, including; hope, mercy, love, and a hundred other "attributes" rolled together, enabling Himself to create all things --making Him what He is. Also consider... Exodus 4:16, God told Moses that Aaron would be to him for a mouth, and he would be a god (*elohim*) to Aaron. The form of *elohim* is plural, and of course Moses was only one "person" — not a family of divine beings. Then Moses was to be like *elohim* to Aaron --he would be in a position of more authority and power (strength). In Exodus 7:1 God told Moses that he would be like *elohim* to Pharaoh.

Also --this word occurs in the plural to intensify the noun and show the totality of His strength; His power, as is done commonly in the Hebrew.

**Gill, Point 1a (cont'd):** "...he (Moses) must have some design in it, which could not be to inculcate a plurality of gods, for that would be directly contrary to what he had in view in writing, and to what he asserts, (Deut. 6:4). "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord": nor a plurality of mere names and characters, to which creative powers cannot be ascribed; but a plurality of persons..."

**MY NOTE 4:** Creative powers *can certainly* be ascribed to the names and expressions of God. Otherwise we would *have to say* that He is separate "persons", as Gill says. This a philosophical statement of prejudice.

**Gill, Point 1a (cont'd):** "...for so the words may be rendered, distributively, according to the idiom of the Hebrew language; In the beginning *everyone*, or "each of the divine persons", created the heaven and the earth".

**MY NOTE 5:** To conclude that it's an "...idiom of the Hebrew language..."; Hebrews being staunchly monotheistic, to portray them to the world as being polytheistic by replacing the Word "God" with "everyone", and then passively adding, "...or each of the divine persons...", is heresy. Why not say that "everyone" includes the angels as well? This makes the Hebrews look like idolaters and promulgators of idolatry (Also see Note 3).

**Gill, Point 1a (cont'd):** "...and then Moses goes on to make mention of them (the names of the divine family); who, besides the Father, included the Spirit of God, that moved upon the face of the waters, and the Word of God 3, which said, "Let there be light, and there was light"; and which spoke that, and all things, out of nothing..."

**MY NOTE 6:** To this my question would be, If these first verses show a plurality in the nature of God then why does it stop? Why does it not tell us which one “saw”, “divided”, “set”, and “blessed”? Also, “words” do not speak, they are “spoken”. Why can it not be the case that when God used His language; His Word, that creation naturally followed? It seems as if Gill is saying that the person of God the Father can’t or won’t “speak” Himself because His “Word” is a separate person. I also see that Gill is saying that when The Holy Spirit moved, The Father and His Word didn’t?

**Gill, Point 1a (cont’d):** “And it may be further observed, that this plural word “Elohim”, is, in this passage, in construction with a verb singular, "bara", rendered "created"; which some have thought is designed to point out a plurality of persons, in the unity of the divine essence: but if this is not judged sufficient to build it upon, let it be further observed, that the word “Elohim” is sometimes in construction with a verb plural, as in (Gen. 20:13; Gen. 35:7; 2 Sam. 7:23) where “Elohim”, the *gods*, or *divine persons*, are said to cause Abraham to wander from his father's house; to appear to Jacob; and to go forth to redeem Israel: all which are personal actions: (Deut. 4:7, 5:26; Josh. 24:19; 2 Sam. 7:26, 27; Ps. 58:11, Prov. 30:3; Jer. 10:10) in which places Elohim, gods, or the divine persons, are said to be nigh to the people of Israel; to be living, holy, and to judge in the earth; characters which belong to persons; and now, as a learned man well observes, "that however the construction of a noun plural with a verb singular, may render it doubtful to some whether these words express a plurality or not, yet certainly there can be no doubt in those places, where a verb or adjective plural are joined with Elohim".

**MY NOTE 7:** With a reasonable search I could not prove that the verbs, “caused”, appeared”, or “went”, is either singular or as Gill says, plural. It cannot be that a reasonable, regenerated person has to be a Hebrew scholar to understand what is meant by, “...God appeared unto him...”. I find it hard to believe that a common Christian, for whom The Word was written, would have to be told that this simple phrase actually *means* a plurality of Gods. As to these attributes being “...characters which belong to persons...” -why not just as easily *The* person -One God?

**Gill Point 1a (con’d):** “...No such stress is laid on this word, as if it was the clearest and strongest proof of a plurality in the Deity; it is only mentioned, and mentioned first, because it is the most usual name of God, being used of him many hundreds of times in scripture; and what stress is laid upon it, is not merely because it is plural, but because it appears often in an unusual form of construction; it is used of others, but not in such a form; as has been observed. It is used of angels, (Ps. 8:5) they being not only many, but are often messengers of God, of the divine Persons in the Godhead, represent them, and speak in their name. And it is used of civil magistrates, (Ps. 82:6) and so of Moses, as a god to Pharaoh, (Ex. 7:1) as they well may be called, since they are the vicegerents and representatives of the Elohim, the divine Persons, the Triune God...”

**MY NOTE 8:** The word, Elohim, in these passages has no bearing on Genesis 1:1 consider MY NOTE 3. Within the definition of the word is, “deity”. It’s used of the Supreme God and “gods in the ordinary sense” alike. In this manner it’s used to speak of many.

**Gill Point 1a (con’d):** “...nor need it be wondered at, that it should be sometimes used of a single Person in the Deity, it being common to them all; and since each of them possess the whole divine nature and essence undivided, (Ps. 45).

**MY NOTE 9:** Obviously David had interaction with the expression of God as The Christ but I see no more proof of a plurality of gods than Genesis 1:1. This is also a philosophical statement of prejudice.

**Gill Point 1a (con’d):** “The ancient Jews not only concluded a plurality, but even a Trinity, from the word Elohim. With respect to the passage in (Num. 15:16) they say, "There is no judgment less than three"; and that three persons sitting in judgment, the divine Majesty is with them, they conclude from (Ps. 82:1) "he judgeth among the gods", Myhla. Hence they further observes, that "no Sanhedrin, or court of judicature, is called Myhla unless it consists of three". From whence it is manifest, that the ancient Jews believed that this name not only inferred a plurality of persons, but such a plurality which consisted of three at least.”

**MY NOTE 10:** Concerning Numbers 15:16 and the ancient Jews... This commentary, if it's true that the ancient Jews believed in a plurality of gods –meaning The God, would be information handed down to us from a spiritually dead people who were absorbed in Pagan idolatry. How could we rely on their belief system from writings made from any point in their culture outside of Scripture? There is no mention of which scribes or secular writers made these claims. Who knows? Besides this, as we know, Gill translates from the Septuagint.

**Gill Point 1a (con'd):** “Another plural name of God is Adonim (Lords); "If I am (Adoaim) Lords, where is my fear?" (Mal. 1:6) now, though this may be said of one in the second and third persons plural, yet never of one in the first person, as it is here said of God by himself; "I am Lords"..."

**MY NOTE 11:** Besides the fact that when I looked this word up it showed me the singular, “adon”(Lord), if it is plural, why could it not relate to the magnitude in size of His sovereignty as easily as Genesis 1:1? To say that the personal pronoun “I” relates to His essence and then the plural “Lords” relates to His tri-unity sure looks like a philosophical statement of prejudice to me. Do they just pick and choose as they go through a verse?

**Gill Point 1a (con'd):** “...and we are sure there are two, "The Lord said to my Lord", &c. (Ps. 110:1).

**MY NOTE 12:** This passage seems close to proving Gill's point! If I had not concluded by this point that he is a philosopher, I may be more interested. However... why could it not just as easily be the case that The Father expressed Himself to David as The Christ? David well knew of The Father of Israel and it has always seemed obvious to me that David either had certain knowledge of or contact with God as the express image of His person as opposed to the cloudy pillar or other ways that God had expressed Himself to Israel earlier in time. Also considering that Psalm 110 is a Messianic Psalm I would think it necessary for God to reveal His express image to create the Scripture.

**Gill Point 1a (con'd):** “In Daniel 4:17 the most high God is called the watchers and the Holy Ones; "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the Holy Ones"; which respects the revolution and destruction of the Babylonian monarchy; an affair of such moment and importance as not to be ascribed to angels, which some understand by watchers and Holy Ones; but however applicable these epithets may be to them, and they may be allowed to be the executioners of the decrees of God, yet not the makers of them; nor can anything in this world, and much less an affair of such consequence as this, be said to be done in virtue of any decree of theirs: besides, this decree is expressly called, the decree of the most High, (Dan. 4:24) so that the watchers and Holy Ones, are no other than the divine Persons in the Godhead; who are holy in their nature, and watch over the saints to do them good; and over the wicked, to bring evil upon them: and as they are so called in the plural number, to express the plurality of them in the Deity; so to preserve the unity of the divine essence, this same decree is called, the decree of the most High, (Dan. 4:24) and they the watcher and Holy One, in the singular number in (Dan. 4:13).”

**MY NOTE 13:** This is all philosophy and subjective rhetoric. The “watchers” and “holy ones” could just as easily be Gabriel, Michael, or any other of the angels. Concerning their “making the decree”, verse 24 says that God made the decree. If the angels made the decree first then it would obviously be with God's permission unless He had no knowledge of the decree having been made which I would find hard to believe. So why does it matter if they made it first or God made it first and they reiterated it.

**Gill, Point 1b:** “A plurality in the Deity may be proved from plural expressions used by God, when speaking of himself, respecting the works of creation, providence, and grace. At the creation of man he said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness", (Gen. 1:26) the pronouns "us" and "our", manifestly express a plurality of persons; these being personal plural characters; as image and likeness being in the singular number, secure the unity of the divine essence; and that there were more than one concerned in the creation of man, is clear from the plural expressions used of the divine Being, when he is spoken of as the Creator of men...”

**MY NOTE 14:** Yes, the age-old argument. The plural pronouns are used and one side says it proves this and the other side says no... Why could it not mean the angels just as easily as the decree in Daniel 4? Also, while there are 4 times when the plural pronouns are used in this context, there are over 2000 times when the singular pronoun is used; to which Trinitarians say it speaks of His essence there and the individual persons here... far from proof text to me.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** : "...in all which places, in the original text, it is my Makers, his Makers, thy Creators, thy Makers; for which no other reason can be given, than that more persons than one had an hand herein; as for the angels, they are creatures themselves, and not possessed of creative powers..."

**MY NOTE 15:** How can he say so dogmatically that the angels had no creative powers granted to them? Who knows? If God created "us" in "their" image, meaning His and the angels, why not delegate creative responsibility for which He would still get all the credit.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** "...nor were they concerned in the creation of man, nor was he made after their image and likeness; nor can it be reasonably thought, that God spoke to them, and held a consultation with them about it; for "with whom took he counsel?" (Isa. 40:14). Not with any of his creatures; no, not with the highest angel in heaven; they are not of his privy council. Nor is it to be thought that God, in the above passage, speaks "regio more", after the manner of kings; who, in their edicts and proclamations, use the plural number, to express their honour and majesty; and even they are not to be considered alone, but as connotating their ministers and privy council, by whose advice

they act; and, besides, this courtly way of speaking, was not so ancient as the times of Moses; none of the kings of Israel use it; nor even any of those proud and haughty monarchs, Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar; the first appearance of it is in the letters of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, (Ezra 4:18, 7:23) which might take its rise from the conjunction of Darius and Cyrus, in the Persian empire, in both whose names edicts might be made, and letters wrote; which might give rise to such a way of speaking, and be continued by their successors, to express their power and glory: but, as a learned man observes, "it is a very extravagant fancy, to suppose that Moses alludes to a custom that was not (for what appears) in being at that time, nor a great while after."

**MY NOTE 16:** If the angels were given responsibilities in Creation, this in no way means that they "counseled" God. No more than if any king delegates to any subordinate. They could just as easily just been doing what they were told. Also, Moses would have used the intricacies of language as God related to Him what was to be written. We will not give very much credit to tradition as it is true that Jesus often warned and rebuked men for this.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** "The Jews themselves are sensible that this passage furnishes with an argument for a plurality in the Deity."

**MY NOTE 17:** Throughout this chapter Gill repeatedly uses the Jews as a source. Orthodox Jews consider it a reproach to be called polytheistic –I've asked a few, but it's a well known fact.. I realize that Gill and the Trinitarians are saying that they are *not* polytheistic but terms like "threeness" and "tri-unity" and "persons" in a godhead, all lend themselves immediately to the idea and the Trinitarian has no resolution other than the arguments you read here. At the same time it's a fact that because the Jews don't recognize Jesus as The Messiah, they have many pagan traditions passed down through the generations and Gill may well be correct in stating that they believe in a trinity *and* a unity within God. Jesus Himself warned of trusting the traditions of man and I agree.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** "...A like way of speaking is used concerning men, in (Gen. 3:22). "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us"; not as one of the angels, for they are not of the Deity, nor the companions of God, and equal to him; for whatever private secret meaning Satan might have in saying, "Ye shall be as gods"; he would have it understood by Eve, and so she understood it, that they should be not like the angels merely, but like God himself; this was the bait he laid, and which took, and proved man's ruin..."

**MY NOTE 18:** We know that a third of the angels had fallen and so the angels had the ability to sin. When Satan said, "...ye shall be as gods..."and God said, "...the man is become as one of us..." -why would it matter if the angels were or were not deity. I see no reason why man could not have been created with similarities of angels as well as God -God created angels and so they surely have similarities with Him. Almost all creatures have eyeballs and they are all roughly in the same position on the head. Apparently God thought that eyeballs and their placement was a good idea so why would we think that He came up with numerous perfect ways of doing the same basic things? After Adam disobeyed, the issue became that Adam and Eve now knew the knowledge of good and evil –like God and the angels.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** "...the Lord God said these words either sarcastically, "Behold the man whom Satan promised, and he expected to be as one of us, as one of the persons in the Deity; see how much he looks like one of us! who but just now ran away from us in fear and trembling, and covered himself with fig leaves, and now stands before us clothed with skins of slain beasts!" or else as comparing his former and present state together; for the words may be rendered, "he was as one of us"; made after their image and likeness: but what is he now? he has sinned, and come short of that glorious image; has lost his honour, and is become like the beasts that perish, whose skins he now wears..."

**MY NOTE 19:** This seems quite an amount of liberty to take with Scripture... all philosophical statements of doctrinal prejudice.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** "Philo", the Jew, owns that these words are to be understood not of one, but of more; the *en kai polla*, the "one" and "many", so much spoken of by the Pythagoreans and Platonists; and which Plato speaks of as infinite and eternal, and of the knowledge of them as the gift of the gods; and which, he says, was delivered to us by the ancients; who were better than we, and lived nearer the gods; by whom he seems to intend the ancient Jews; this, I say, though understood by their followers of the unity of God, and the many ideas in him, the same with what we call decrees; I take to be no other than the one God, and a plurality of persons in the Deity; which was the faith of the ancient Jews; so that the *polla*, of Plato, and others, is the same with the *plhyov* of Philo, who was a great Platonizer; and both intend a plurality of persons."

**MY NOTE 20:** A few years ago I read and learned just enough of Plato, Pythagoras, and ancient Jewish dogma to know that I wouldn't trust them. The reason I'm not impressed with philosophers is not *simply* because they make claims against my predispositions and persuasions, but because they all go on these tangents and I end up with the impression that they believe that *they* give each other authority because they agree. I don't trust their agreement.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** "God sometimes uses the plural number when speaking of himself, with respect to some particular affairs of providence, as the confusion of languages; "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language", which also cannot be said to angels; had it, it would rather have been, go "ye", and do "ye" confound their language:"..."

**MY NOTE 21:** Gill's saying that God would've said, "ye", if He was not a plurality of persons? Why could God not go with His angels, who serve as His ministers, messengers, and servants –who, in fact, carry Him around in a whirlwind? Again; philosophical statements of doctrinal prejudice.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** "...but, alas! this work was above the power of angels to do; none but God, that gave to man the faculty of speech, and the use of language, could confound it; which was as great an instance of divine power, as to bestow the gift of tongues on the apostles, at Pentecost; and the same God that did the one, did the other; and so the "us" here, are after explained of Jehovah, in the following verse, to whom the confounding the language of men, and scattering them abroad on the face of the earth, are ascribed, (Acts 2:8-11)."

**MY NOTE 22:** Confounding languages was beyond the control of the angels? How could a man possibly know this? If God took them with Him to do the work why would He not give them the ability to perform it?

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** "In another affair of providence, smiting the Jewish nation with judicial blindness; this plural way of speaking is used by the divine Being; says the prophet Isaiah, "I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isa. 6:8) not the seraphim say this, but Jehovah; for to them neither the name Jehovah, nor the work agree; and though there is but one Jehovah that here speaks, yet more persons than one are intended by him; of Christ, the Son of God no question can be made, since the Evangelist applies them to him; and observes, that Isaiah said the words when he saw his glory, and spoke of him, (John 12:40, 41) nor of the Holy Ghost, to whom they are also applied (Acts 28:25, 26). There is another passage in Isaiah 41:21-23 where Jehovah, the King of Jacob, challenges the heathens, and their gods, to bring proof of their Deity, by prediction of future events; and, in which, he all along uses the plural number; "show us what shall happen, that we may consider them; declare unto us things for to come, that we may know that ye, are gods, and that we may be dismayed;" See also Isaiah 43:9."

**MY NOTE 23:** I, as a man, have the great privilege of knowing many people to whom I can delegate responsibility. Gill's saying that God has to be a plurality of persons because all this stuff gets done. God simply delegated responsibility, along with the authority to carry out those responsibilities; Trinitarianism is a subjective philosophy.

**Gill, Point 1b (con'd):** “And as in the affairs of creation and providence, so in those of grace, and with respect to spiritual communion with God, plural expressions are used; as when our Lord says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him", (John 14:23) which personal actions of coming and making abode, expressive of communion and fellowship, are said of more than one; and we cannot be at a loss about two of them, Christ and his Father, who are expressly mentioned; and hence we read of fellowship with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ; and also of the communion of the Holy Ghost, (1 John 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:14). To all these instances of plural expressions, may be added (Song 1:11; John 3:11).

**MY NOTE 24:** All this falls under the simple fact that the expression of God as Christ is our perfect example in glorifying God The Father, in living a life of humility, having confidence in the hope of comfort, and in recognizing the express image of His person as our only path to follow.

**Gill, Point 1c:** “A plurality in the Deity may be proved from those passages of scripture which speak of the angel of Jehovah, who also is Jehovah; now if there is a Jehovah that is sent, and therefore called an angel, and a Jehovah that sends, there must be more persons than one who are Jehovah.

The first instance of this kind is in Genesis 16:7, where the angel of Jehovah is said to find Hagar, Sarah's maid, in the wilderness, and bid her return to her mistress; which angel appears to be Jehovah, since he promises to do that for her, and acquaints her with future things, which no created angel, and none but Jehovah could, (Gen. 16:10-12) and what proves it beyond all dispute that he must be Jehovah, is, what is said, (Gen. 16:13) "She called the name of the Lord, or Jehovah, that spake unto her, thou; God, seest".”

**MY NOTE 25:** God sending an angel cannot absolutely speak to His having a plurality of persons. Just because Sarah glorified God and recognized that the message came from Him certainly doesn't mean that the angel was some “person” in the Godhead. The account in Genesis 17 states that it was The Lord Who appeared to Abraham. Why must they cloud this simple fact by describing His presence as a different “person”? Because they have a Trinitarian presupposition.

**Gill, Point 1c (con'd):** “In Genesis 18:2 we read of three men who stood by Abraham in the plains of Mamre, who were angels in an human form, as two of them are expressly said to be (Gen. 19:1). Dr. Lightfoot is of opinion, that they were the three divine Persons; and scruples not to say, that at such a time the Trinity dined with Abraham; but the Father, and the Holy Spirit, never assumed an human form; nor are they ever called angels. However, one of these was undoubtedly a divine Person, the Son of God in an human form; who is expressly called Jehovah, the Judge of all the earth, (Gen. 18:13, 20, 25, 26) and to whom omnipotence and omniscience are ascribed, (Gen. 18:14, 17-19) and to whom Abraham showed the utmost reverence and respect, (Gen. 18:27, 30, 31) and now he is distinguished, being Jehovah in human form on earth, from Jehovah in heaven, from whom he is said to rain brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, (Gen. 19:24) which conflagration was not made by the ministry of created angels, but is always represented as the work of Elohim, of the divine Persons (Jer. 50:40; Amos 4:11).”

**MY NOTE 26:** Here again, the claim to know so much about the duties and nature of the angels... I see no reason why all of this and any other act of God which He chose to delegate could not be delegated to His messengers.

**Gill, Point 1c (con'd):** “An angel also appeared to Abraham at the offering up of his son Isaac, and bid him desist from it; and who appears plainly to be the same with him who ordered him to do it; expressly called God, (Gen. 22:11, 12 compared with Gen. 22:1, 2) and Jehovah, who swore by himself, and promised to do what none but God could do, (Gen. 22:16-18; Heb. 6:13, 14) where what is here said is expressly ascribed to God. Add to this, the name Abraham gave the place on this occasion, Jehovah-Jireh, because the Lord had appeared, and would hereafter appear in this place.

**MY NOTE 27:** Not proof texts. See MY NOTES 25 & 26

**Gill, Point 1c (con'd):** “The angel invoked by Jacob, (Gen. 48:15, 16) is put upon a level with the God of his fathers Abraham and Isaac; yea, is represented as the same; and the work of redeeming him from all evil, equal to that of feeding him all his life long, is ascribed to him; as well as a blessing on the sons of Joseph, is prayed for from him; all which would never have been said of, nor done to, a created angel.”

**MY NOTE 28:** That Jacob would either call God an angel, perceive God to be an angel, or testify that He saw an angel should come as no surprise –Jacob was a man. The fact that Jacob attributed so much to the angel and prayed that the angel would bless his boys seems in no way a proof of a plurality of Gods. Whether God had assigned this angel to Jacob, or if God was actually performing all these things Himself, or if Jacob called God an angel; why would it matter? God got the glory either way.

**Gill, Point 1c (con'd):** “The angel which appeared to Moses in the bush, (Ex. 3:2) was not a created angel, but a divine person; as is evident from the names by which he is called, Jehovah, God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, "I AM that I AM", (Ex. 3:4, 6, 14) and from the things ascribed to him; seeing the afflictions of the Israelites, coming to deliver them out of Egyptian bondage, and promising to bring them into the land of Canaan, (Ex. 3:7, 8) to which may be added, the prayer of Moses for a blessing on Joseph, because of the good will of him that dwelt in the bush, (Deut. 33:16) and the application of this passage to God, by our Lord Jesus Christ, (Mark 12:26).

**MY NOTE 29:** The fact that Jesus said that the burning bush was The Father doesn't prove that they're separate persons. It could just as easily be that Jesus was giving all credit, honor, and glory to The Father all His life, at every opportunity; being our perfect example.

**Gill, Point 1c (con'd):** “Once more, the angel that was promised to go before the children of Israel, to keep and guide them in the way through the wilderness to the land of Canaan, is no other than Jehovah; since not only the obedience of the children of Israel to him is required; but it is suggested, that should they disobey him, he would not, though he could, pardon their iniquities; which none but God can do: and also it is said, the name of the Lord was in him; that is, his nature and perfections; and since it is the same the children of Israel rebelled against, he could be no other than Christ, the Son of God, whom they tempted; the angel of God's presence; who, notwithstanding, saved and carried them all the days of old (Isa. 63:9; 1 Cor. 10:9).”

**MY NOTE 30:** The comparison of Isaiah 63:9 and I Corinthians 10:9 do not prove separate persons, but could just as easily prove a singular nature. Israel tempted God in His expression to them as Father and we are to not tempt Christ, the express image of His person for the work of the New Covenant.

**Gill, Point 1c (con'd):** “Again, we read of the angel of the Lord, before whom Joshua the high priest was brought and stood, being accused by Satan, (Zech. 3:1) who is not only called Jehovah, (Zech. 3:2) but takes upon him to do and order such things, which none but God could do; as causing the iniquity of Joshua to pass from him, and clothing him with change of raiment (see Isa. 61:10).”

**MY NOTE 31:** This is all opinion stated as fact. Why can't the angel of The Lord be the expression of God in the circumstance?

**Gill, Point 1c (con'd):** “To these may be added, all such scriptures which speak of two, as distinct from each other, under the same name of Jehovah; as in the above mentioned text, (Gen. 19:24) where Jehovah is said to rain fire and brimstone from Jehovah, out of heaven; and in Jeremiah 23:5, 6, where Jehovah promises to raise up a righteous branch to David, whose name should be called "Jehovah our righteousness"; and in Hosea 1:7 where Jehovah resolves he would save his people by Jehovah their God. Other passages might be mentioned, as proving a plurality in Deity; but as some of these will also prove a Trinity in it, they will be considered under the following head; where it will be proved...”

**MY NOTE 32:** This too is all his biased opinion stated as fact.

**Gill, Point 2 (con'd):** “Secondly, That this plurality in the Godhead, is neither more nor fewer than three; or, that there is a Trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence: this I have before taken for granted, and now I shall prove it. And not to take notice of the name Jehovah being used three times, and three times only, in the blessing of the priest, (Num. 6:24-26) and in the prayer of Daniel, (Dan. 9:19) and in the church's declaration of her faith in God, (Isa. 33:22) and the word holy repeated three times, and three times only, in the seraphim's' celebration of the glory of the divine Being, (Isa. 6:3) and in that of the living creatures, in Revelation 4:8 which may seem to be accidental, or the effect of a fervent and devout disposition of mind; but there is not anything, no not the least thing, that is said or written in the sacred scriptures, without design.”

**MY NOTE 33:** I agree that... “not anything, no not the least thing, that is said or written in the sacred scriptures, is without design...”. It is certainly true that the most prevalent and meaningful ways that God has revealed Himself to man is as a Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Therefore, while He has revealed Himself many times, in many ways, these three expressions are not only the most important for us but they speak directly of His essence. God is not a “cloud” or an “angel”, neither is He a “talking animal”, but He’s expressed Himself in those ways as well. He *is* Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in His relations to man and even within these He’s always been a Spirit and He’s always been Holy. The names of these expressions are the “umbrella” terms; the expressions of Himself through which all others have flowed. If we’re going to attribute individual personhood to the three then why not attribute personhood to all of the other expressions? Maybe the reason men don’t attribute individual personhood to all of the expressions of God is that these three expressions are the most important, the most dominant, and the most relevant; maybe it’s so that the Trinitarian philosopher can create a defense for his doctrine of a plurality of Gods. I understand that Trinitarians say they believe in one God but that’s not at all what it sounds like—except when it’s convenient.

**Gill, Point 2 (con’d) & MY NOTE 34:** I won’t paste Gill’s entire argument for **I John 5:7** due to the fact that I don’t intend to take his apart piece by piece but to offer a very simple exegesis. I’m familiar with all the arguments over this passage and I don’t want to address any of them because I don’t believe any that I’ve ever read or heard. I do believe that this passage alone should settle the issue.

### I John 5:7-9

**I.** “This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood.”

**II.** “And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.”

**III.** “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

**IV.** “And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.”

**V.** “If we receive the witness of men...”

**VI.** “...the witness of God is greater...”

**VII.** “...for this is the witness of God...”

**VIII.** which he hath testified of his Son.”

### Exegesis

**I.** Jesus was water (flesh) and blood – one human body. It takes both to be human, or *alive*, and He had both. The mention of His blood would also signify His death for us.

**II.** The Spirit bears witness to His life *and* death because it is true and The Spirit is Truth.

**III.** There are three which supply evidence in Heaven; The Father, the Word, and The Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

**IV.** There are three which supply evidence in humanity, The Spirit, the water, and the blood. All are in one body – called a human, like Jesus (v7) was a human.

**V.** If we accept the fact that humans consist of water and blood in a body and if we accept that Jesus was water and blood in a body...

**VI.** Then we should as easily accept the greater evidence given by God concerning His Heavenly body; that God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in one body.

**VII.** The fact that Jesus Christ was water and blood in one body, and the fact that *we ourselves* are comprised of water and blood in one body, as well as all humanity consisting of water and blood -each in their own single body—and The Spirit bearing witness to all this, *is the evidence* from God that The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are in one body.

**VIII.** and God gave evidence of this fact through that one human body He created for Himself, Jesus.

This tells us that as we have different elements in one body, so does He. We are still, in many ways, in His image.

**Gill, Point 2a:** “2a. In the works of creation: as by these the eternal power and Godhead are made manifest, so in them are plain traces of a Trinity of persons; that God the Father made the heavens, earth and sea, and all that are in them, under which character the apostles addressed him as distinct from Christ his Son, (Acts 4:24, 27) none will doubt; and that the divine Word, or Son of God, was concerned in all this a question cannot be made of it, when it is observed that it is said, "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that is made" (John 1:3). And as for the Holy Spirit he is not only said to move upon the face of the waters which covered the earth, and brought that unformed chaos of earth and water into a beautiful order, but to garnish the heavens, to bespangle the firmament with stars of light, and to form the crooked serpent, the Leviathan, which being the greatest, is put for all the fishes of the sea; as well as he is said to be sent forth yearly, and renews the face of the earth at every returning spring; which is little less than a creation, and is so called, (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; Ps. 104:30)

**MY NOTE 35:** That Jesus is magnified and glorified is no proof text that He is a separate person from the Father. Jesus, the express image of God with Whom we must deal in order to experience regeneration, is truly the only One with Whom we need to be concerned. John 1:3 reveals Jesus in the position He *has* and for which He deserves to be recognized. How would *we*, as humans, perceive how God creates if He hadn't told us that He used words to do it?

**Gill, Point 2a:** “...and all three may be seen together in one text, (Ps. 33:6) "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth"; where mention is made of Jehovah, and his Word, the eternal Logos, and of his Spirit, the breath of his mouth, as all concerned in the making of the heavens, and all the host of them. And as in the creation of man, in particular, a plurality has been observed, this plurality was neither more nor fewer than three; that God the Father is the maker of men, will not be objected to; "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?" (Mal. 2:10) and the Son of God, who is the husband of the church, and the Redeemer of men, is expressly said to be their maker, (Isa. 54:5) and of the Holy Spirit, Elihu in so many words says, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4).

**MY NOTE 36:** In Psalm 33 the writer is simply repeating himself and rejoicing in The Lord. Words are made of breath. I would venture to say that God made the hosts by “speaking” as well as the heavens. If the statement that the hosts were made by the breath of His mouth means that He *blew* and created them instead of speaking to create them –what difference does it make? I don't see why it has to be a separate person. “... the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” If His breath is the separate person, His Spirit, then which one “formed” Adam? And so on with a thousand other passages. Gill picks what he wants to expose and leaves the rest.

**Gill, Point 2b:** “... A Trinity of persons appears in the works of providence. "My father", says Christ, "worketh hitherto and I work", (John 5:17) that is, ever since the works of creation were finished, in which both had an hand, they have been jointly concerned in the works of providence, in the government of the world, and in ordering and disposing of all things in it; and not to the exclusion of the Holy Spirit...”

**MY NOTE 37:** Concerning references to Jesus showing Himself separate from The Father in the gospels or New Testament and for the Old Testament references prophesying Jesus as Son, etc., let me deal with them all here.

**A.** Concerning Old testament prophecy seeming to show a separation in persons:

The Messiah was The One Who was to be dealt with, longed for, looked for, expected, etc. I have no qualms with Scripture's intimating Jesus as a future expression of God. Also see MY NOTE 12 which I believe would easily apply not only to the Messianic Psalms but all references of prophecy to Jesus in the Old Testament which could be construed to mean separate persons.

**B.** Concerning the gospels and the New Testament seeming to show a separation in persons:

I would begin by making make the standard reply that Jesus was setting the perfect example for us to follow in all these circumstances and the writer's of the New Testament were maintaining the focus on Christ as our Savior. (John 5:17, Matthew 3:17, John 17, Hebrews 1, Colossians 1, etc.) For Jesus to come and claim glory to a human body, i.e., His own body of flesh, would have been irrational for a number of reasons:

1. This would not make Him our perfect example but rather teach us to glorify ourselves.

2. The Old and New Testaments alike prove that matters of controversy were to be settled by the mouths of two or three witnesses. If Jesus had not included The Father as Israel knew Him in these issues of glory, prayer, baptism, etc., then he would have been to them a heretic according to Old

Testament Scriptures, which they well knew. When he spoke to them of the Father or spoke of The Father as if he were a separate entity, it was for their sakes. He only told His inner circle the depth of the matter. He was not *lying* or *pretending* or *deceiving* but following the Old Testament rules which He Himself had set in place for man to govern himself in matters of controversy.

3. "...But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die." (Deuteronomy 18:20)

If Jesus had spoken in His own name standing before them in a body of flesh –as they were flesh, they would have been compelled to disbelieve Him and then been justified, according to Scripture, in killing Him. They would have perceived that he was saying He was a god.

4. The purpose of a false prophet was to lead the people away from Jehovah. Jesus would've been perceived as being a false prophet when His mission was the opposite.

5. Jesus always showed deference to The Father and so He used the term, Son. If he had claimed equality only the lunatic fringe might've followed and He would've looked like a *nut* as many before. His meekness was a source of humility for those who knew who He was and those who didn't.

6. Even though the people of that day didn't believe He was a perfect example of how man should relate to God, though they called false witnesses and called Him a false witness, though they accused Him of saying that He was equal, even though they tortured and killed Him (as He allowed) -they were unjust because He was justified by the Law. This proves them to be guilty of His blood.

7. I will add here that the many manifestations of Jesus, the throne, and certain Angels Who are obviously God in the book of Revelation are explained simply in the statement of chapter 21: 5-6 with chapter 1:8 and others describing Jesus.

**Gill, Point 2b (con'd):** "...Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him?" that is, in the affair of the government of the world, as follows; "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?" to manage the important concerns of the world, to do everything wisely and justly, and to overrule all for the best ends and purposes (see Isa. 40:13,14).

**MY NOTE 38:** I just don't see any reason to conclude that because the Bible says that God's Spirit did something that it means that His Spirit is a separate person.

**Gill, Point 2b (con'd):** "...And particularly the three divine persons appear in that remarkable affair of providence, the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, and the protection and guidance of them through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. Whoever reads attentively (Isa. 63:7-14) will easily observe, that mention is made of Jehovah, and of his mercy, loving-kindness, and goodness to the children of Israel; and then of the Angel of his presence, as distinct from him, showing love and pity to them, in saving, redeeming, bearing, and carrying them all the days of old; and next of his Holy Spirit, whom they rebelled against, and whom they vexed, and yet, though thus provoked, he led them on through the wilderness, and caused them to rest in the land of Canaan.

**MY NOTE 39:** Concerning Isaiah 63:7-14, as well as like Scriptures listed thus far; why would one have to believe that all these gods are doing all these different things –within God- instead of the simple matter of God expressing Himself in words about the state of His relationship to them at that moment. See previous NOTES 32, 33, 37, 38.

**Gill, Point 2c:** "The three divine persons are to be discerned most clearly in all the works of grace. The inspiration of the scriptures is a wonderful instance of the grace and goodness of God to men, which is the foundation and source of spiritual knowledge, peace, and comfort; it is a divine work: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God", (2 Tim. 3:16) of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and though it is particularly ascribed to the Holy Spirit, "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost", (2 Peter 1:21) yet no one surely will say, to the exclusion of the Father; nor is there any reason to shut out the Son from a concern herein; and we find all three dictating the writings David was the penman of: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in tongue; the God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me", (2 Sam. 23:2, 3) where, besides the Spirit of the Lord, who spake by every inspired writer, there is the Father, the God of Israel, as he is commonly styled, and the Son, the Rock of Israel, the Messiah, often figuratively called the Rock; and in the same manner, and by the same persons David was inspired, all the other penmen of the scriptures were. Those writings acquaint us with the covenant of grace, no other writings do, made from everlasting before the world was; this covenant was made by Jehovah the Father, and was made with his

Son, who condescended and agreed to be the surety, mediator, and messenger of it; yea he is said to be the covenant itself; and in which the Holy Spirit is promised, and whose part in it is, and to which he agreed, to be the applier of the blessings and promises of it to those interested therein; see (Ps. 89:3; Isa. 42:6; Mal. 3:1; Heb. 7:22, 12:24; Ezek. 36:27; John 16:14, 15) and they are all three mentioned together as concerned in this covenant, in (Hag. 2:4, 5) where, for the encouragement of the people of Israel to work in rebuilding the temple, it is said, "For I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts", according to "the word that I covenanted with you"; or rather, as Junius renders it, "with the Word" by whom I covenanted "with you, when ye came out of Egypt", (at which time the covenant of grace was more clearly and largely revealed;) "so my Spirit remaineth among you": where may be observed, Jehovah the covenant maker, and his Word, in, by, and with whom he covenanted; and the Spirit standing, as it may be rendered, remaining and abiding, to see there was a performance and an application of all that was promised. In the sacred writings, the economy of man's salvation is clearly exhibited to us, in which we find the three divine persons, by agreement and consent, take their distinct parts; and it may be observed that the election of men to salvation is usually ascribed to the Father; redemption, or the impetration of salvation, to the Son; and sanctification, or the application of salvation, to the Spirit; and they are all to be met with in one passage, (1 Peter 1:2) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus". The same may be observed in (2 Thess. 2:13, 14) where God the Father is said to choose men from the beginning unto salvation; and the sanctification of the Spirit, is the means through which they are chosen; and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, the end to which they are chosen and called: but no where are these acts of grace more distinctly ascribed to each person than in the first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, where God the Father of Christ, is said to bless and choose his people in him before the foundation of the world, and to predestinate them to the adoption of children by him, in whom they are accepted with him, (Eph. 1:3-6) and where Christ is spoken of as the author of redemption through his blood, which includes forgiveness of sin, and a justifying righteousness; which entitles to the heavenly inheritance, (Eph. 1:7, 11) and then the Holy Spirit, in distinction from them both, is said to be the earnest of their inheritance, and by whom they are sealed until they come to the full possession of it (Eph. 1:13,14).

**MY NOTE 40:** To the idea of "all 3" writing the Bible... Why do the different activities of God have to be attributed to different persons? Is Gill truly saying that the pre-incarnate Christ went inside of David's mouth and into his tongue? Concerning Haggai 2:4-5 and Junius –with whom I'm vaguely familiar, to say that changing "the word" to "with the word" proves the Trinity is biased on a scale that surpasses the boundary of decency. Also see NOTE 41.

**Gill, Point 2c (con'd):** "...The doctrine of the Trinity is often represented as a speculative point, of no great moment whether it is believed or not, too mysterious and curious to be pried into, and that it had better be let alone than meddled with; but, alas! it enters into the whole of our salvation, and all the parts of it; into all the doctrines of the gospel, and into the experience of the saints; there is no doing without it; as soon as ever a man is convinced of his sinful and miserable estate by nature, he perceives there is a divine person that he has offended, and that there is need of another divine person to make satisfaction for his offences, and a third to sanctify him; to begin and carry on a work of grace in him, and to make him meet for eternal glory and happiness."

**MY NOTE 41:** So ...as soon as ever a man is convinced of his sinful and miserable estate by nature, he perceives there is... a trinity? I could read this is a denial of Jesus Christ as The only Way. The prophecies, the virgin birth, His life, teachings, ministries, torture, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension; it's all about Jesus. A person believing in God's revelation to man as The Father of Israel or a Holy Spirit to comfort them is not the point and is not The Gospel. I will go so far as to say that a man better *not* start with The Holy Spirit and certainly not The Father a way to be delivered from a sinful and miserable estate. It all starts with Jesus and His cross. Why would Gill think that someone would even *think* all of that... a divine person, another divine person, another divine person -it's Jesus alone.

**Gill, Point 2d:** "A Trinity of persons in the Godhead may be plainly discovered in all things relating to the office and work of Christ, as the Redeemer and Savior. In the mission of him into this world on that account: he, the Son of God, was sent by agreement, with his own consent, by the Father and the Spirit; this is affirmed by himself, (Isa. 48:16) "Now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me..."

**MY NOTE 42:** To Isaiah 48:16... does verse 17, "...Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I *am* the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldest go..." - mean that the Redeemer, the Holy One, The LORD, the teacher, and the leader are all separate persons? Why do they stop with 3 -I mean, I know why they say they stop at 3 but I can't believe it.

**Gill, Point 2d (con'd):** "...I am the first and the last", and whose hand laid the foundation of the earth, and whose right hand spanned the heaven, and who is continued speaking to (Isa. 48:16) and must be a divine person; the mighty God, who is said to be sent by Jehovah the Lord God, and by his Spirit; who therefore must be three distinct persons, and not one only; or otherwise the sense must be, "now I and myself have sent myself", which is none at all."

**MY NOTE 43:** Concerning Isaiah 48:12+, the context shows that He is speaking over and over of Himself:

A. v.12 -I, I, I

B. v.13 -Mine, My, I

C. v.14 -The LORD, He, His (3rd person)

D. v. 15 -I, I, I, I

E. v.16 "...Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there *am* I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me." Is this not Isaiah interjecting? Isaiah had an impartation of The Spirit of God. I believe that the way God expresses "going" with someone is in a manner such as this. The Lord gave Isaiah the command to go and then sent an impartation -not a separate person- but His *Spirit* with him. Could this not well be the same as sending a blessing for the work? The blessing wouldn't be considered a separate person.

F. Then back to God speaking of Himself... v. 17 -I

G. v. 18 -My, and so on...

**Gill, Point 2d (con'd) and 2e:** "...Christ the Son of God, sent to be the Saviour, in the fullness of time was made of a woman, or became incarnate; and though he only took flesh, the three divine persons were concerned in this affair; the Father provided a body for him in his purposes and decrees, council and covenant; the Word or Son was made flesh, and dwelt among men, and that which was conceived in the Virgin, was of the Holy Ghost, (Heb. 10:5; John 1:14; Matthew 1:20) and in the message to the Virgin, and the declaration of this mysterious affair to her by the angel, mention is made distinctly of all the three Persons; there is the "highest", Jehovah the Father; and "the Son of the highest",

who took flesh of the Virgin; and the Holy Ghost, or "the power of the highest", to whose overshadowing influence, the mysterious incarnation is ascribed (Luke 1:32,35). Christ, the Son of God, being incarnate, was anointed with the Holy Ghost, his gifts and graces without measure; whereby, as man, he was fitted and qualified for his office as Mediator. The anointer is said to be God, his God, the great Jehovah; the anointed, the Son of God in human nature, called therefore the Christ of God, the true Messiah; what he was anointed with was the Holy Ghost, his gifts and grace, signified by the oil of gladness; see (Ps. 45:7; Isa. 61:1; Acts 10:38) when he was thirty years of age he was baptized of John in Jordan, where all the three divine persons appeared; the Son in human nature, submitting to the ordinance of baptism: the Father, by a voice from heaven, declaring him to be his beloved Son; and the Holy Spirit, descending on him as a dove (Matthew 3:16, 17). This was always reckoned so full and clear a proof of the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, that it was a common saying with the ancients, go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the Trinity. Before our Lord's sufferings and death, he gave out various promises to his disciples, that he would send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to them; in which there are plain traces of a Trinity of Persons; as when he says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter" (John 14:16). Here is God the Father of Christ, who is prayed unto, who is one Person; and here is the Son in human nature, praying, a second Person, the Son of God; and because he was so, his prayer was always prevalent; nor could he be a mere creature, who speaks so positively and authoritatively, he shall give you; and then there is another Comforter prayed for, even the Spirit of truth, distinct from the Father and the Son; the same may be observed in and in (John 15:26, 16:7). Christ by his sufferings and death, obtained eternal redemption for men. The price that was paid for it, was paid to God the Father so it is said, "hath redeemed us to God by thy blood" (Rev. 5:9). What gave the price a sufficient value was, the dignity of

his person, as the Son of God, (1 John 1:7) and it was "through the eternal Spirit" he offered himself to God, (Heb. 9:14) which some understand of the divine nature; but it is not usual to say, Christ did this, or the other thing, through the divine nature, but by the Spirit, as in (Matthew 12:28; Acts 1:2) besides, in some copies of (Heb. 9:14) it is read, "through the Holy Spirit". Again, Christ having suffered and died for men, he rose again for their justification; in which all the three persons were concerned; God the Father raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, (1 Peter 1:21) and he raised himself by his own power, according to his own prediction, (John 2:19) and was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness" or the Holy Spirit, "by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4, see also Rom. 8:11).

**2e.** This truth of a Trinity in the Godhead, shines in all the acts of grace towards or in men; in the act of justification; it is God the Father that justifies, by imputing the righteousness of his Son, without works, (Rom. 3:30, 4:6, 8:33) and it is not only by the righteousness of Christ that men are justified; but he himself justifies by his knowledge, or by faith in him, (Isa. 53:11) and it is the Spirit of God that pronounces the sentence of justification in the conscience of believers; hence they are "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God", (1 Cor. 6:11) in the act of adoption; the grace of the Father in bestowing such a favor on any of the children of men, is owned, (1 John 3:1) and through the grace of Christ, a way is opened, by redemption wrought out by him, for the reception of this blessing; and he it is that gives power to those that believe in him, to become the sons of God, (Gal. 4:4, 5; John 1:12) and the Holy Spirit witnesses, their adoption to them; hence he is called the Spirit of adoption, (Rom. 8:15, 16) and all three appear in one text, respecting this blessing of grace; "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father", (Gal. 4:6) where the Father is spoken of as distinct from the Son, and the Son from the Father, and the Spirit from them both, and all three bear their part in this wonderful favour. Regeneration is an evidence of adoption; and an instance of the great love and abundant mercy of God; and which is sometimes ascribed to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (1 Peter 1:3) and sometimes to the Son of God, who regenerates and quickens whom he will, (John 5:21; 1 John 2:29) and sometimes to the Spirit of God, (John 3:3, 5) and all three are mentioned together in (Titus 3: 4-6) where God the Father called our Savior, is said to save by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which grace of his is shed abroad in men through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Once more, their unction, or anointing, which they receive from the Holy One, is from God the Father, in and through Christ, and by the Spirit; "Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts", (2 Cor. 1:21, 22) where God the Father is represented as the establisher and anointer, and Jesus Christ, as a distinct person, in whom the saints are established and anointed; and the Spirit, distinct from them both, as the earnest of their future glory.

**MY NOTE 44:** It's obvious that distinctions are made throughout the Old and New Testaments as to The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. My contention is that while we are called upon and taught repeatedly to acknowledge the differences, this does not prove that there are three people in a divine family of Gods. The "three persons-in-one" theory is simply not necessary to explain these passages. God was known as The Father of Israel to Israel *and* the heathen nations. Jesus is made known as our Redeemer with Whom we must deal, Who took for us the wrath of The Father. The description of Himself as The Comforter is the way we are enabled to live with Him and He with us, now, after the cross.

**Gill, Point 2f:** "It plainly appears that there is a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, from the worship and duties of religion enjoined good men, and performed by them. The ordinance of baptism, a very solemn part of divine worship, is ordered to be administered, and is administered, when done rightly, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost", (Matthew 28:19) which are to be understood, not of three names and characters, but of three persons distinctly named and described, and who are but one God, as the singular word "name", prefixed to them, signifies; men are to be baptized in one name of three persons; but not into one of three names, as an ancient writer has observed; nor into three incarnates; but into three of equal honour and glory."

**MY NOTE 45:** First of all I will *not* rest in "...the worship and duties of religion enjoined good men, and performed by them..." Otherwise we stand in danger of putting too much credence in the men of old or this modern age for our doctrine. Concerning baptism in 3 names... The reason for the use of His name is for identification purposes. We identify ourselves to the world as followers of this way; Jesus and His way. While it's true that Jesus' name *is* Jehovah and Jehovah's name *is* Jesus, according to the etymology of the word, "Jesus"; there is only *one name* whereby we must be saved —i.e., Jesus. There are not three names to be baptized under and with which to identify.

When Jesus said to His disciples, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...”, surely they knew what He meant! And again, see NOTE 41. They had spent enough time with Him to know Who He was besides the fact that He had plainly told them in private. Considering this, Matthew 28:19 along with Acts 2:38 should be proof texts not only for baptizing using Jesus’ name, but proof texts for the single personhood of God. Were the disciples –was Peter– so long with Him and didn’t know Who He was? We must identify ourselves with His atoning sacrifice at Calvary for our private regeneration. Why would we afterward identify ourselves with The Father or Holy Spirit (as separate persons with separate names) when we’re making our open testimony to the world in baptism?

**Gill, Point 2f (con’d):** “God alone is to be invoked in prayer, and petitions are directed sometimes to one Person, and sometimes to another; sometimes to the first Person, the God and Father of Christ, (Eph. 3:14) sometimes to Christ himself, the second Person, as by Stephen, (Acts 7:59) and sometimes to the Lord the Spirit, the third Person, (2 Thess. 3:5) and sometimes to all three together, (Rev. 1:4, 5) and whereas the saints, who are made light in the Lord, need an increase of light, prayer is made for them, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that is, of Christ, (Eph. 1:17, 18) where the Father of Christ is prayed to; the Spirit of wisdom is prayed for; and that for an increase in the knowledge of Christ, distinct from them both: and whereas the saints need an increase of strength, as well as light, prayer is made for them, that the Father of Christ would strengthen them by his Spirit in the inward man, (Eph. 3:14-16; Zech. 10:12) and in a for mentioned text, prayer is made to the divine Spirit, to direct the hearts of good men into the love of God, and patient waiting for Christ, (2 Thess. 3:5) where again the three divine Persons are plainly distinguished; and who may easily be discerned as distinct Persons, in the benedictory prayer of the apostle, (2 Cor. 13:14) with which I shall conclude the proof from scripture, of a Trinity of Persons in the unity of the divine essence; "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all". Amen. To which may be added; that a plurality of Persons in the Godhead, seems necessary from the nature of God himself, and his most complete happiness; for as he is the best, the greatest and most perfect of Beings, his happiness in himself must be the most perfect and complete; now happiness lies not in solitude, but in society; hence the three personal distinctions in Deity, seem necessary to perfect happiness, which lies in that most glorious, inconceivable, and inexpressible communion the three Persons have with one another; and which arises from the, incomprehensible in being and unspeakable nearness they have to each other (John 10:38 14:10, 11).”

**MY NOTE 46:** Concerning praying to each in Gill’s godhead... Revelation 1:4-5 is mentioned. Verse 4 speaks of the seven spirits around his throne –could we not refer to them as the spirits of God too? So should we pray to them? Then arises the issue of praying to saints and dead loved ones... The focus of the Trinitarian doctrine is not Jesus Christ.

### Conclusion

The predisposition of the reader will most likely determine their conclusion on this matter. I also realize that The Scripture can be “forced” to say whatever we want it to say, no matter what. Crossroads Baptist Church is not Unitarian, Pentecostal, or Apostolic; not a Modelistic, Monarchianist, Sabellian, Subordinationist, or Arian. I just don’t trust philosophers. The closest I’ve seen to describe my persuasion is the short definition of a “Patripassianist” but I’m not gonna cram philosophical terms down the churches’ throat. God is a Spirit and can reveal Himself in anyway He chooses –and does He so as He chose in His decree. I have no loyalty to philosophy though I’ve had fellowship in certain areas before I stopped reading them. I have no inhibitions to stand in difference to the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith on this point though I believe it to be an invaluable reference tool.

In this quick study I’ve come to the same conclusion as in 1996 and 2001 when I studied this issue for myself against Theissan, Dagg, Boyce, Gill, and others. I find the same arguments over the same passages, and same disputes over the same Hebrew and Greek words. This time, since the invention of the internet, I’ve searched online also and heard nothing that I hadn’t heard before. When I get to Heaven, if I see three then I will surely be surprised and will humble myself immediately to worship the One in the middle! I also realize that I so desperately despise idolatry and man’s religion that even a hint of either puts me on guard. The argument for Trinitarianism is to argue for idolatry –and the average church goer has no idea of the depths of the depravity and idolatry in this doctrine.

I am neither a Hebrew nor Greek scholar and I probably sound like a rebel. When I think of God as 3 people, con-substantial, I feel dirty inside, like I don't want Him watching me think that way; like I'm creating images of Him in my mind that shouldn't be there. In years past as well as this go 'round with this study, I find that it takes me a few minutes to enjoy reading God's word in my normal reading because I'm aggravated, this time with John Gill, for creating such a distortion. Certainly, no one knows it all and I *do see* how Trinitarians come to their conclusions.

When The Lord is dogmatically spoken of as 3-in-1, it quenches me out. I also realize that it could be said of my persuasion that it's a presupposition or that I need to research more or learn the Hebrew and Greek better, etc. but the bottom line is that regardless of these things, all of which are partially true; I've studied this issue with fervor – and I am assuredly a Baptist; a Sovereign Grace Baptist. I became settled on my issues and for the past 25 years have simply enjoyed studying to learn and help God's people grow. I'm not scared to defend my positions on any of the controversial issues but have often found it pointless when dealing with someone who is immovable. It's hard to watch a Gnostic claiming to be Christian while promoting polytheism with no more proof than his own opinion and his interpretation of a language that another philosopher easily interprets a different way.

The issue that we ultimately face with the doctrine of the Trinity is that it takes the Glory from Jesus and spreads it out among 3 gods while at the same time passing much glory to the men who began and propagated it. “ Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4:10-13)

When it's stated that there are 3-in-1, the “1” *part*, is misleading and it appears that millions have lived and died in idolatry, not even knowing *which one* they should be praying *to* in their times of despair and rejoicing -due to this doctrine. I believe it's dangerous. Again... “*If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God...*” (John 7:17). I also believe that this doctrine is a part of the “strong delusion” in this end time. When I get there if there are three –I'll certainly try to repent ASAP! But I find it impossible to believe it now based on any philosopher I've read and I find that explanations are so simple in Scripture that only an extremely smart human could confuse them!

Finally, I simply don't see any reason that God should be strictly defined as 3-in-1 when he has so well lived up to the name He gave Moses in Exodus 3:14. *He is what He is*. He has been everything to me that I've ever needed and I know beyond any doubt that He will continue to be so for all eternity. I realize that the most prevalent and important ways that He's revealed Himself to us is as The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit; and I realize that all of the other ways He has expressed Himself to man —Creator, cloud, fire, angel, friend, judge, coming down to see the tower, The Rock in the wilderness, The Manna, The Captain of the host, in Ezekiel's wheels, The Lamb, The Lion of the tribe of Judah, and a hundred other ways...all begun in one of those 3 main expressions The expression of God to us that must and will be most high and lifted up, most glorified and honored, most cherished and defended –the only One Who matters where we are concerned, is, of course, our Lord, Jesus Christ. To this I'm sure that all His children agree. Thanks!

With love and respect,

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