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The Doctrine Of

TRINITY

Part 04

Questions About Trinity

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Bible Doctrines Made Simple 004
Capsule Series For Busy People

The Doctrine Of TRINITY 04

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Dr. Johnson C. Philip
Dr. Saneesh Cherian

The Doctrine of Trinity 04

We have been receiving numerous questions about the doctrine of Trinity. Some are important, others are just trivial. Here we answer some of the important questions:

Question: I find it difficult to understand the doctrine of trinity. So I do not believe in it.

Answer: You seem to be claiming that you do not believe in anything that you do not understand. You reject things that you do not understand, and that you would not have to do anything with such things.

What you claim is more of idealism -- simple and plain empty idealism, than realism. We say that because there are thousands of things in your life which you do not understand, but you still believe in those things and actively get involved in them.

For example, most readers of this book will not have any clue about quarks and gluons that form atoms. Yet, none of them will deny the existence of atoms. Most will have no clue about pharmacology, but still they will go ahead and take medicines prescribed by the doctors. Most of them will have no clue about

internal combustion, yet they will go ahead and use two wheelers, cars, and buses. I can mention a thousand other things from your everyday life that you do not understand even a bit but which you accept as true and even as reliable.

In other words, this argument that you do not accept something as true that you do not understand is a totally false declaration. This argument cannot be used against Trinity seeing you do not abide by this argument in a thousand other things. In other words, you accept those things that you wish to accept and reject those things that you do not wish to accept. It is purely due to an emotional choice on your part and not due to logic that you do not accept what you do not understand.

Question: Was not this doctrine invented in the fourth or fifth century?

Answer: NOBODY, particularly no human, invented the doctrine of trinity. It is God's word that revealed this doctrine to His children. The process started in Genesis where God said "Let US make man in OUR image".

The fact that the expression US represents a plurality of persons is made clear in Genesis 3:22 where we read "And the LORD God said,

Behold, the man is become as one of us". The expression "like one of us" or "as one of us" shows there is more than one person there. So the announcement of the doctrine of Trinity had its origin 6000 years ago in the garden of Eden where God made it clear that more than one person was involved. This fact was written down by Moses about 3500 years ago. After that there are numerous references in the Bible where the uni-plurality (one in many, many in one) is repeatedly mentioned.

Thus, the doctrine of Trinity has its origin in the first book of the Bible, not in some Church Councils. It is a God-given doctrine and no man or no church council invented it.

Question: How can Jesus be God when He can only do what He sees the Father do (John 5:19)?

Answer: You have quoted just one verse out of a paragraph made up of multiple verses. Obviously, quoting just a single statement out of a related-cluster of sentences can turn the meaning upside down. That is the problem with your question.

Actually Lord Jesus was replying to their accusations in verse 18: "...said also that God was his Father, making himself EQUAL with God". When they accused Lord Jesus in this

manner, the Lord replied them. This reply is found from verse 19 up to 47, a very long reply indeed.

In the above reply the Lord made it clear that He and Father are definitely co-equal, but that they have chosen different roles. The role played by the Father is different from that played by the son. This is not because of inequality but rather a division of work among equals. And then the Lord says the He sees what the Father does and then does the same so “That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father” (Verse 23).

In other words, you are confused because you have picked up just one isolated verse from a statement that is about 30-verses long. Please read the whole statement in context and it will become clear that Lord Jesus made it clear in this passage that He and Father are co-equal, but that they have chosen different tasks and roles.

Question: If no man has seen God at any time, how can Jesus be God (John 1:18) because numerous people were able to see Him.

Answer: Each statement of the Bible should be interpreted in context. Else we would end up messing up the intended meaning. The verse

you quoted is from Lord Jesus who makes it clear in context that nobody can see God in His actual (omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent) form. However, when He came to this world, Lord Jesus took human form and it is that human form that we all see. So there is no conflict between what the Lord said about God and the fact that humans could see the incarnate Lord Jesus.

Question: How can Jesus be God if He has a God over Him (John 20:17)?

Answer: That is a very interesting way of misinterpreting the Bible. In this passage Lord Jesus says “My God and your God” not the “God OVER me”. Here ‘My God’ is an expression to show the position of the father, as the divine planner of everything. Such expressions are common in human language.

When a mother says “our daddy will come home soon”, it does not mean that her husband is her daddy. The same is true of the statement in John 20:17.

Question: If Jesus is God, why does He submit His will to the Father (Luke 22:42)? How can Jesus surrender the Kingdom to God if He is God Himself (1 Corinthians 15:28)?

Answer: The question assumes – falsely – that God does not submit to any person. Here the question labels ‘submission’ as ‘inequality’ and that is the problem.

Actually the plan of creation, redemption, and glorification involves all three persons in Trinity. God the Father conceived it, God the Son executed it, and God the Holy Spirit sustains it. When there is such a coordinated plan, one person will coordinate and the others will ‘submit’ to that coordination. Here submission is related to ‘management’ and not to inequality. All efficient coordination between multiple persons involves coordination and submission and the same is true with the Godhead. This does not mean that those who submit are less than the person who coordinates.

Question: If God can’t be tempted by evil, how could Jesus be God seeing He was tempted (James 1:13; Matthew 4:1)? How Could Satan tempt Jesus with something God already possesses (Matthew 4:8-9)?

Answer: Truly God cannot be tempted in any way. However, Lord Jesus took a new nature upon Himself to become God-man. This God-man Savior had three aspects to His nature.

The divine nature, the human nature, and the divine-human nature.

Of these, the human nature was fully and truly human and that is why Lord Jesus could be hungry and thirsty. It is this human nature that can be tempted. It has nothing to do with the divinity of the Lord Jesus.

Question: How can Jesus be God and at the same time be the “Son of God” (John 1:1; 3:16)? If Jesus is “begotten,” how can He be God Himself (John 1:18)? Since angels are called “sons of God” (Job 38:7), does this prove Jesus is a created angel?

Answer: The word “son” has numerous meanings, and one should first make sure in what sense this word is used for Lord Jesus. Unfortunately, in your question you are choosing a meaning according to your anti-trinitarian prejudice and that is the real problem here.

When expressions like “son of soil” or true Son of India is used, we interpret it rightly. We do not assume that soil has a wife or that India has a wife to give birth to a son. Similarly, when the expression son-of-God is used for Lord Jesus, it does not mean that God gave birth to Lord Jesus.

Luke 1:35 says 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.'" In other words, since Lord Jesus took human form by the power of God the Holy Spirit, He is called Son-of-God in his incarnation. It has nothing to do with an actual descent from a father.

Question: Why does Jesus say the Father is "greater" than Him (John 14:28)?

Answer: You are assuming that if the Father is greater than the Son, then the son is no co-equal with the father. Here again the problem is not with what the Lord said but with the way you have misinterpreted it.

Actually the expression "greater" is not used about the Godhood or the essence (nature) of Father and Son. Rather, the expression is used in relation to the "roles" they have chosen in relation to the salvation of mankind.

For the work on the cross it was necessary for one person (the Father) to plan it, a second person (Lord Jesus) to follow the plan, and still another person (the Holy Spirit) to sustain the execution of plan. It is in relation to this 'plan of salvation' that the Lord uses the expression

that the Father has taken the greater 'role' and the Son has taken the lesser 'role'. The greater and lesser roles have nothing to do with their Godhood.

Question: If Jesus is God's "Firstborn" Son, was He created (1 Corinthians 1:15)?

Answer: This question is related to the earlier one that asks how can the Son of God be God. As we mentioned earlier, expressions like son, and firstborn have multiple meanings. You have chosen that particular meaning that suits you. However, that is not the way the Bible is to interpreted!

In the case of Lord Jesus, the expression firstborn shows his 'position'. Let me begin with an example. David was not the firstborn, but rather was the youngest Son. Yet he was named as the 'firstborn. The psalmist gives a description of David as being the firstborn. The Lord said of him:

I will also appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth (Psalm 89:27).

In the light of the above, please note the following statement:

And He is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn over all creation
(Colossians 1:15).

Please notice that here the expression is similar to what is used for David. Firstborn here refers to 'position' not birth. Further, the expression is firstborn OVER all creation and NOT firstborn OF all creation. Thus your question is totally wrong.



About The Authors

Dr. Johnson C. Philip is an expert in Quantum-nuclear Physics and has done research about the inner structure of Protons and Neutrons (Hadrons). He has authored hundreds of books and he hopes to join hands with Dr. Saneesh Cherian to produce more than 100 volumes of these compact Bible/Science books to bless your spiritual life.



Dr. Saneesh Cherian is an expert in Communication and Sociology. Having completed two doctorates in theology and a masters in Sociology from a prestigious University, he has been working towards his next doctorate.



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