

The Oneness of God: Twenty Biblical Reasons for Believing in One God, the Father

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1. The Jewish Concept of God as One.

Key text: Deut. 6:4 - "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord!"

Mark 12:28-34 - Jesus quotes the Shema as the first (Gr. protos) commandment in importance.

This basis of historic, first century and modern Judaism was never challenged by Jesus or the apostles. Jews and Moslems today find the trinity antithetical to monotheism. The doctrine of the trinity is more harmful to the spread of Christianity than any other doctrine.

2. The Jewish Concept of the Messiah: Not to be God himself, but one sent by God.

Deut. 18:15-18 - "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me (Moses)"

"The Lord said ... 'I will raise up a prophet ... like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him ...'" (cf. Acts 3:22-26).

A. Caiaphas did not expect the Messiah to be God Himself but "the Christ, the Son of God." It was this that Caiaphas called blasphemy (Mt. 26:63-65, Mk. 14:61, Lk. 22:70, Jn. 19:7).

B. Peter did not preach that Jesus was God but was "Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him" (Acts 2:22).

3. "Only One God, the Father." Paul wrote that "there is no God but one ... There is but one God, the Father ..." (I Cor. 8:4, 6). If the trinitarian view is correct, why didn't Paul write, "There is but one God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?"

4. "The Only True God" was identified by Jesus and Paul as the Father.

John 17:3 - Jesus prayed, "That they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." He did not say, "That they may know US, the only true God."

I Thess. 1:9-10 - "You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven." If the "true God" is a trinity, the trinity has a Son!

5. The Mediatorship. I Timothy 2:5 - "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." The mediator cannot be God, but must be between God and men. If Jesus is God, he cannot be our mediator. Only a sinless man could be the mediator between God and sinful humanity.

6. "God and Jesus." Scripture often talks of God and Jesus in the same sentence.

If we say "the Smith family and Hezekiah" or "the boys and Susie," it is obvious that the second is added because it is not included in the first. Is Jesus not included in "God"?

A. I Cor. 13:14 - "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." Three persons mentioned. God is the Father only.

B. In all his letters, Paul speaks of "**God our Father** and the Lord Jesus Christ" - Rom. 1:7-9; I Cor. 1:3, 4,9; 2 Cor. 1:2,3,21; Gal. 1:1,3; Eph. 1:2,3,17,22; 5:20; 6:23; Phil. 1:2; 2:11; Col. 1:2,3,15; 3:17; I Thess. 1:1,3,9,10; 3:11, 12; 2 Thess 1:1,2,12; 2:16; I Tim. 1:1,2; 5:21; 2 Tim. 1:2, 4:1; Titus 1:4; Ph. 3.

C. General epistles, same: James 1:1, I Pet. 1:2,3; 2 Pet. 1:2; 2 Jn. 3; Jude 1.

7. Two Wills. Jesus said, "I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (John 6:38), and "not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42, Mt. 26:39). Two wills speaks of two persons, two personalities. Does God have a split personality? Is it not nonsense to say we have two persons but only one being?

8. Jesus is the Image/form/representation of God. Scripture does not say he is God himself.

A. Col. 1:15 - "He is the image of the invisible God." (Cp. also 2 Cor. 4:4).

B. Phil. 2:6 - "He existed in the form of God."

C. Heb. 1:3 - "He is the exact representation of His nature."

Observation: An image/form/representation can only exist after an original exists.

9. Jesus sits at the right hand of God. Does God sit beside Himself?

A place at the king's right hand is the highest honor a king can bestow, but the one who sits there is not the king himself. Mt. 26:64; Mk. 14:62; 16:19; Lk. 22:69; Acts 2:33; 7:55; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 10:12; 12:2.

Fittingly, Jesus is sometimes given the title "Prince." Acts 3:15; 5:31.

10. Begottenness. Jesus is uniquely begotten of God. Implies a time before being begotten. God, by definition, is unbegotten. How can the begotten and the unbegotten be the same? (monogenes - John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; I Jn. 4:9; Today - Ps. 2:7, Acts 13:33, Heb. 1:5, 5:5).

11. Sonship. The metaphor of sonship implies the priority of a father. Jesus is consistently identified in scripture not as God or "God the Son" (a term which never occurs in scripture) but as "Son of God." Peter's confession was that "You are the Christ, the SON OF the living God," not that Jesus was the living God Himself (Matt. 16:16). See also the testimony of John the Baptist (John 1:34), Nathaniel (John 1:49), Martha (John 11:27),

Mark (Mark 1:1), the Ethiopian (Acts 8:37), the enemies at the cross (Mt. 27:40, 43), the centurion at the cross (Mt. 27:54, Mark 15:39), the angel (Luke 1:32, 35), demons (Mark 3:11, 5:7), Satan (Mt. 4:3, 6), and God (Mt. 17:5).

12. The Temptation Question. Jesus was "tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin," (Heb. 4:15), but "God cannot be tempted by evil" (James 1:13). How then could Jesus have been "God 'in the flesh' "?

13. The "Sin-Potential" Dilemma. COULD Jesus have sinned?

If we say no, then the so-called "temptation of Jesus" by the devil was not temptation at all, and Jesus did not really know what it is like to be human. If he did not know what it was really like to be human then "incarnation" is meaningless. To acknowledge that Jesus could have sinned, to answer yes to our question, is to acknowledge that Jesus was not Almighty God Himself, for God by His nature is holy and could never, possibly, sin.

14. Jesus died. God is immortal (I Tim. 6:16) and cannot die. Did part of God die?

15. Jesus bore our sins. Could sin be laid on God Himself?

"The Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him" (Isa. 53:6).

16. Jesus was forsaken by God on the cross (Mt. 27:46, Mark 15:34).

"Did God forsake a third of himself, or what? Was Jesus God, or not God at that time?"

17. Jesus descended to Hades. Hades by definition is the place of separation from God. Was God in Hades when

Jesus was there? Then it was not Hades.

18. Jesus had a God, and that God raised him from the dead.

A. Jesus called the Father his God - Mt. 27:26, Mark 15:34, John 20:17.

B. Peter talks of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" - I Pet. 1:3.

C. Paul uses that expression 5 times - Rom. 16:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; 11:31; Eph. 1:3, 17.

D. Hebrews 1:9 speaks of the God of the Son.

E. This relationship continues in the eternal kingdom - Rev. 1:6; 3:12.

F. God raised Jesus from the dead and glorified him - Acts 3:13; 5:30.

Questions: If Jesus is God, is he his own father? Did he raise himself from the dead?

19. Subordination. The Scriptures consistently teach the subordination of the Son.

John 14:28 - "The Father is greater than I."

I Cor. 11:3 - "The head of Christ is God."

I Cor. 15:24-28 - The Son is subject to the Father in the eternal kingdom.

Matt. 28:18 - Jesus' authority was given to him (not inherent in him).

Jesus was sent/commissioned by the Father and did nothing on his own John 5:26, 27, 30, 36, 38, 43; 6:29, 39, 44, 46, 57; 7:16-18, 28, 29, 33, etc.

20. Argument from Silence. Put yourself in the context of the first century Jews. If Jesus had been GOD HIMSELF, that would have been the big announcement the disciples and Paul would have had to make to the world - and to DEFEND (assuming they taught a trinity) against the arguments of the Jewish paradigm of monotheism. Did they ever make claims that Christ was deity, or God was a trinity? No. Did the Jews understand them to hint at such claims, and therefore argue this case with them? NO! WHY THIS SILENCE?

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