

Bro Eames,

Thank you for your scholarship and considerable reflection about the most important topic there is, Jesus Christ. I love that you utilize the key texts and dissect them in terms of meaning and context. I believe that you have a keen insight with regard to Yahweh as the language of God coming close in the Old Testament, for that is certainly present. I might quibble with this or that point on your Christological hymnic analysis (but Bro Bernard and Bro Segraves and I all have a little different perspective on this hymnic material), yet I cannot but be very appreciative about your motive and discerning modality without discerning hypostatic distinction.

Again, thank you for sharing with me. I appreciate your thoughtfulness and scholarship. I am proud of you!

Bro David S Norriss

In the Beginning Was the Word

Donald W. Eames

3-1-16

Nearly 2,000 years ago Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do men say that I the Son of man am?"

When Peter immediately responded, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God", Jesus said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (Mat 16:17)

Attempts to answer this question which Jesus asked so long ago have continued to be made by philosophers, theologians, presbyters, bishops, and innumerable others. The first centuries following the deaths of the apostles saw men like Arius, Apollinarius, Nestorius, Eutyches, Athanasius, and others, striving to develop a universally acceptable Christological dogma that could accomplish the Roman Emperor Constantine's desire for civil and ecclesiastical unity throughout the Roman empire. Finally, in 325 AD, the Emperor summoned all the bishops of the empire to meet in council at Nicea; and after heated and lengthy discussions, a deacon named Athanasius proposed that his creed be accepted by the council, and largely due to having the favor of Constantine, it was. Thus, the initial version of the Trinity dogma was formulated, and after some fine-tuning by subsequent councils, it became the orthodox dogma of the Roman Empire and has grown to be the nearly universal standard for Christianity.

If we consider some of the Christological models that have been proposed by various Christian groups in their attempts to explain the relationship of Father, Son,

and Holy Spirit in a monotheistic manner, it will become obvious that the key issue that divides their various constructs is how each of them identifies or explains the Logos of John's prologue. For example, to Arius and his Unitarian followers the Logos was created ex nihilo and was not therefore an eternal being. He was however in Arius' view, the creator of the universe and everything in it, and second only to God Himself. Another view is expressed by some modern Oneness Pentecostals that "God's Word (Logos) was the expression of God's mind, thought, and purpose, which was God Himself."

A third view held by the Trinitarians is that the Logos was the second person of a tri-personal God.

The primary objective of this paper therefore is to explore the possibility of discovering an alternative to the orthodox model of the Trinity, and to that end our focus will be to formulate a reasonable and coherent explanation of the nature of the Logos and how it can be possible for this enigmatic entity to be distinct from God in one sense and in another sense actually be God Himself.

The developers of the Trinity dogma reasoned that in order for the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior to be true God He must be an eternal being, and therefore must have co-existed with God the Father in eternity. From this assumption the question arises, is this the only way in which the Lord Jesus can be an eternal being? The answer is no; for it can be shown that there is more than one way to be eternal. The first which comes to mind is to have no beginning and no end; and this is the approach we shall follow in this paper.

The Transcendence of God

Since God created all things, He necessarily exists beyond or apart from that which comes into being from and through Him. Furthermore, since time, space, matter and energy are all part of the created order we can thereby deduce that in His transcendent state of existence He must be, timeless, beginning less, immaterial, and without spatial location. This clearly describes God in eternity. It would also be reasonable to believe that had He not willed to create, there would obviously be no space time universe nor any of His own temporal manifestations such as the man Christ Jesus.

Why Is There Something Rather Than Nothing?

In attempting to understand more about the transcendent God's ultimate purpose in creating all things, we can utilize scriptural inferences and look for clues that will help us determine the answer to G. W. Leibnitz' classic question, "Why is there something rather than nothing?" Or, as renowned atheist Stephen Hawking put it, "Why does the universe bother to exist?"

What was God's ultimate objective in creation? And what steps were necessary for Him to accomplish His divine plan which He decreed from eternity? One such clue can be found in Rev 21:3 KJV:

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

From this verse it seems that dwelling with a people whom He has made acceptable to Himself was His ultimate goal, and everything from beginning to end tells the story of what He had to be or do in order to achieve this goal. Furthermore, the process had to be executed precisely as He ordained because of His otherness, purity and holiness as compared to the abject condition of the objects of His great love, humankind.

In proceeding through His plan distinctions will arise, but by allowing God's inspired word to guide us, these distinctions can be explained accurately and harmoniously. We should also be careful not to attribute any qualities or actions to the wrong mode of God's being. For example, the Bible doesn't say that the Eternal Father was the Creator, nor does it say that the Father was made flesh; it says the Word created all things and that the Word became flesh. There are underlying reasons why God did and said things the way He did, and we are not at liberty to make changes.

The Immanence of God

The immanence of God refers to His existing and interacting in time among His own creation.

The Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard described God's transition from being eternal and infinite to becoming temporal and finite in the person of the man Christ Jesus as *The Absolute Paradox*:

The thesis that God has existed in human form; was born, grew up, etc. is certainly... the absolute paradox... But the absolute paradox, precisely because it is absolute, can be related only to the absolute difference by which a human being differs from God; it cannot be related to relative bickering between one human being and another about whether one is a little smarter than the other... But that the by-nature eternal comes into existence in time, is born, grows up, and dies is a break with all thinking. - Søren Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments Volume 1, Princeton University Press, 1992, pp. 217, 579

Paul expresses a similar view, though not in the form of a thesis, but with divinely inspired certainty:

1 Tim 3:16 NASB By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.

Both Kierkegaard and Paul are referring to the mystery of the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ, but the Bible reveals that God initially became immanent prior to the incarnation, upon the completion of His 6-day creation; and it is this pre-incarnate immanence that will be the primary emphasis of this paper.

Surprisingly, many great minds haven't yet discovered that God manifested Himself in an intermediate mode of existence between eternity and His birth in Bethlehem; that is, the mode in which He was enthroned in heaven as the Logos or YHWH.

The Holy Bible from Genesis to Revelation makes it clear that the LORD God (YHWH Elohim) walked in the Garden of Eden and spoke to Adam and Eve from the very beginning of creation, also appearing to their descendants on many occasions in the form of the Angel of the LORD. On one occasion the LORD Himself and two of His angels, all in the form of men, conversed and dined with Abraham and Sarah. (Genesis Chap. 18). Some will say that such a visible, tangible manifestation of the LORD should be thought of as a *Theophany* or temporary manifestation of the essentially invisible God. Although it is true that God in His transcendent mode of being is timeless and invisible, we will later demonstrate scripturally that He did indeed have an intermediate permanently visible mode of existence as YHWH Elohim in which He appeared to His Angelic host and to others as He saw fit.

Distinctions to Be Examined

- God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth, and all living things. (Gen 1:1)
- The LORD God (YHWH Elohim) created and made everything (Gen 2:4); and,
- The Word or Logos made all things. (John 1:1-3)

Obviously there aren't multiple Creators, so all three of these designations must refer to the same being. If this is true, why did John choose to use the term Logos instead of God or LORD God? One possibility is to let his readers know that there was some sort of distinction between the eternal God (Elohim) and His creative Word or Logos, and that this distinction began to exist "in the beginning" of time, yet prior to the "beginning" referred to in Gen1:1 . This view differs from the idea proposed by some scholars that God became temporal concomitantly with creation by virtue of His *new* relationship with it.

It is significant to our study that from Gen 1:1 through Gen 2:3 describing the 6 days of creation, the Creator is simply designated God (Elohim), and not until Gen 2:4 after the completion of His 6 day creation and having entered into His Sabbath rest is He called LORD God:

Gen 2:4 KJV These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

What this suggests is that during the interim period of time between God's transition or emergence from eternity to begin His temporal mode of existence until the completion of the six days of creation, John calls Him the Logos; but upon entering His Sabbath rest the day after forming Adam and establishing His covenant with him, the Logos is called by His newly acquired covenant name YHWH Elohim (LORD God).

This brings us to another example of distinctions existing between God and Lord Jesus Christ which we find repeatedly in all of Paul's epistles, and are to be found in his greetings to the various churches and pastors. The general form of the greeting is: "*Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ...*"

Upon review of these passages it seems clear that the distinctions are the same as those of John's prologue; namely, God in His timeless mode versus LORD God as He began to exist in a temporal mode in order to be the Creator of all things.

Happily, Paul confirms in the following scripture that the distinctions are both modal and functional:

1 Cor 8:6 NASB yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

In other words, Paul explains that there is only one God whom he designates as "the Father" who presumably corresponds to the beginningless, eternal, immaterial source or wellspring of all creation, and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom (in his pre-incarnate state as Logos or LORD God) He created all things.

In summary, what we are attempting to demonstrate by means of scriptural inferences in this paper is that God (Elohim) is the One who transcends space and time; and the Logos or LORD God is the same unipersonal being in a temporal existence. If this is true it would follow that the distinction between the two designations is indeed modal and not personal in nature.

In the following scripture Jude also seems to confirm the idea that God has existed both timelessly and temporally:

Jud 1:25 NASB to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore. Amen.

In the next section of this paper we are going to examine the Christological hymns of Philippians 2:6-11, Colossians 1:15-20, Hebrews 1:2b-4, and John 1:1ff, in order to glean additional scriptural disclosures about the nature and relationship of our God and LORD.

As we study each of the following passages it should help us as Christians to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the great love He had for a people yet to be created and how this love motivated Him to do whatever He deemed necessary to achieve His ultimate goal of being our God and dwelling with us forevermore.

Although these passages are known as hymns, they are indeed the inspired word of God and will provide a valuable test of our thesis.

The first passage to be studied is Phi 2:6-11

Phi 2:6 NASB who, although He existed in the form (morphe) of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men; 8 and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Comments: the Christological information found in this passage was used by Paul to emphasize his main point; namely, that his readers should have the mind of Christ and be of a humble and loving spirit toward one another. To emphasize this point he informs his readers of the incomprehensible degree of humiliation the LORD Jesus Christ was willing to undergo on our behalf. Paul explains in verse 6 that in His pre-incarnate mode of being, Christ existed in the form*, Greek *morphe* of God and it is significant that the word "existed" in this verse is the Greek word *huparchon*, present active participle of *huparcho* which literally means *to begin under* or *to make a beginning*.

Some Trinitarian scholars insist that *huparchon* is "timeless", and therefore not pointing to a time when the pre-incarnate Christ began to exist. Therefore they

maintain that He was co-eternal with God the Father; but Joseph Barber Lightfoot, renowned British scholar (1828-1889) commenting on the word, writes:

“The word (Huparchon denotes ‘prior existence,’ but not necessarily ‘eternal existence.’

Marvin Vincent (1834-1922) in his comments on the word’s usage in our passage writes:

“Huparchon has a backward look into an antecedent condition, which has been protracted into the present. Here appropriate to the Pre-incarnate being of Christ, to which the sentence refers. In itself it does not imply eternal, but only prior existence.” (Vincent’s Word Studies of the New Testament, volume III, page 430).

Finally, the New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon lists the following (page 638) for *Huparchon*:

- a. To begin below, to make a beginning; to begin*
- b. To come forth,*

Paul’s use of *Huparcho* instead of the substantive Greek verb *einei* “to be” strongly suggests that the Lord Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate existence had come into being in a temporal, visible form (*morphe*)* and that He had an antecedent existence which necessarily would be a-temporal, or timeless and immaterial. Obviously, the only being whom this describes is the transcendent God Himself!

**Morphe G3445 - Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon makes this passage very clear: "Who, although (formerly when he was logos asarkos; i.e., pre-incarnate Word) he bore the form (in which he appeared to the inhabitants of heaven) of God . . . yet he did not think that this equality with God was to be eagerly clung to or retained....*

The second passage to be studied is Col 1:15-17:

Col 1: 15 NASB He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Comments: If we allow these 3 verses to speak for themselves, they paint a beautiful Christological portrait. We know that God in His timeless mode of existence in eternity was immaterial or invisible, but in verse 15 we discover that the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ was the first to emerge from eternity and created all things as the *firstborn*; Greek, *prototokos*. (See also Rev 3:14). We also learn from verse 15 that when He came forth from eternity He took upon Himself a visible *image*. (This conforms to what Paul said in the Philippian passage regarding the *morphe* or *form* of God). Verse 16 declares that all things have been created by

Him and for Him. The words *for Him* appear to signify, *for His exclusive purposes as He may choose*. Verse 17 states that He is *before*, Greek *pro* all things, which agrees with His being the *firstborn*. That is to say, He existed chronologically prior to everything and everyone else.

As we mentioned earlier, there are apparent reasons why God chose to do things the way He did, and one of the reasons was to come into existence from eternity to become the Logos or temporal cause of the effects which would ensue during the six days of creation. Another was to become enthroned above the cherubim as King of kings and LORD of lords for the purpose of ruling over His creation.

The third passage to be studied is Heb. 1:1-4:

Heb 1:1-4 NASB God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Comments:

In the previous two passages of Philippians and Colossians Paul provided his readers with sufficient scriptural clues to deduce that the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ came forth from eternity as the temporal and visible manifestation of the eternal Father and as such created all things. The author of Hebrews and the verses here under examination agree with Paul that the pre-incarnate Christ was the Creator, and adds that He is the radiance or effulgence of God's glory and the exact representation of His nature or substance. This agrees well with the previous passages of Phil 2:6 and Col 1:15 in which Paul uses the words *form* and *image* respectively to describe the LORD God's glorious visible manifestation.

A Word from Isaiah

In addition to the former passages there is an additional very prominent passage from the book of Isaiah that is similar in form to a Christological Hymn and it is in perfect harmony with what we have discovered to this point:

Isa 43:10-13 NASB You are My witnesses declares the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me. 11 I, even I, am the LORD, And there is no savior besides Me. 12 It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, And there was no

strange god among you; so you are My witnesses," declares the LORD, and I am God 13 Even from eternity I am He, And there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?"

Comments:

In this passage the speaker is the LORD (YHWH) and He is addressing the Israelites as His chosen witnesses for the purpose of helping them understand whom they are serving. He makes it clear to them that He is the only being worthy of their servitude and devotion. When He declares, "Before Me there was no God formed" he is confirming what we have learned from the Christological hymns; namely, that He is the firstborn of all creation, dwelling in a glorious visible form and since He will live and reign forever, there could be no other God after Him. Again He declares that He alone is the self-existent JHWH (whose very name speaks of existence). Then He emphatically informs them in verses 11-13, that He alone is their Savior, and declares that He is God even from eternity. This leads us to the same conclusion we reached earlier, that the same unipersonal being that existed in eternity in a timeless manner as God (Elohim), became the Logos at the first moment of time. Once again, what this tells us is that the distinctions between God and LORD are modal and not personal in nature. That is, the same being has had two modes of existence, timeless and temporal.

A Closer Look at John Chapter One

John 1:1-3;14;18 NASB 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being; 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth; 18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

In Gen 1:1 we read, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...."; but John's prologue gives us additional information not found in Genesis, and although both passages use the phrase, "In the beginning..." it is obvious that John is informing us of a time prior to the general creation of Genesis when He adds the words, "was the Word", implying that the Word already existed prior to the creation of all things. As we noted earlier, there is one creator with different designations; therefore, what we know about Paul's *firstborn* we know about John's *Logos*. It follows then that the being to whom Paul refers as the *firstborn* in Col 1:15, is identically the same as the *Logos* of John 1:1. Furthermore, as we learned from the "Christological hymns", God willed to come forth from eternity as the Logos or JHWH Elohim in order to be the temporal Creator, sustainer and ruler of all things.

The next verse of John 1 that we want to examine is John 1:14 NASB:

"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth;

The Greek word translated *became* is *egeneto* from *ginomai* -Strong's 1096 *ginomai* – properly, to *emerge, become, transitioning* from one point (realm, condition) to another.

"...and we saw His glory" *as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth;* (This is referring to the incident on the Mount of Transfiguration where Peter, James, and John saw Jesus in all His radiant glory).

The final verse to be considered from John 1 is verse 18 NASB:

No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained (Greek, exegesato) Him.

The translations that use the "Received Text" read, "The only begotten Son", but the eminent Greek scholar A.T. Robertson (1863-1934) had this to say about this variant:

The only begotten Son (o monogenh uio). This is the reading of the Textus Receptus and is intelligible after w monogenou para patro in verse John 1:14 . But the best old Greek manuscripts (Aleph B C L) read monogenh qeo (God only begotten) which is undoubtedly the true text.

Obviously, the reason no one has seen God at any time is that in His transcendent mode of being He is immaterial and therefore invisible. The phrase, *only begotten God* is simply another way of describing the Logos of John 1:1. So we can say that at the precise moment that the Logos came forth from eternity, time began and the Logos, who was God Himself, began a temporal mode of existence as YHWH Elohim (LORD God). Furthermore, since the Logos became flesh and the Logos is YHWH, we can truly say that the man Christ Jesus is YHWH incarnate!

How God Made the Heavens

Psalm 33:6; 9 NASB By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host; 9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Heb 11:3 NASB By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

Our finite intellects cannot begin to comprehend the wisdom and power of a being such as our God who can simply say, "Let there be..." and a seemingly infinite universe springs into being from absolute nothingness.

The Significance of the "I AM"

By using logic and scriptural inferences we have deduced that the transcendent God of eternity had no beginning, existed timelessly, immaterially (as unembodied Mind/spirit), and had no spatial location; but from that state of being He willed that there would be creation. The first item on His agenda was to emerge from timeless eternity to become "the only begotten God" or "firstborn of all creation". Furthermore, since all things were created through His spoken word, specifically by using the verb *to be* (Hebrew *hayah*, it seems reasonable that the mechanism He could have used to come forth from eternity might also be His spoken word. Moreover, since it was the unipersonal God Himself who came forth from eternity what could be a more appropriate use of His creative word than declaring, "I AM!" This no doubt would provide a powerful explanation for the "I AM" sayings of Jesus and for God's answer to Moses' question, "Who shall I say sent me?"

It is this author's conviction that when these words were first uttered time began and the Logos came forth bearing a glorious, resplendent, visible form along with all the emblems which might be expected to characterize His supreme Lordship such as throne, scepter and angelic host within a heavenly city called New Jerusalem. This first event in time can rightly be thought of as the original triumphal entry into His heavenly abode.

At this point some might yet argue against the eternality of such a being. But let's consider this thought for a moment: since it was God the Father Himself who emerged from eternity, He had no beginning and as the Logos or LORD God" He will have no end, thus meeting one of the definitions of an eternal being.

The following passage gives additional support to our thesis that the distinction between LORD and God is modal not personal since the 24 elders address the "One" who sits upon the throne as both Lord and God, first ascribing creative acts to "our Lord" and the will to do so to "our God."

Rev 4: 8-11 NASB "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME." 9 And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

In other words, the 24 elders apparently understood that the one glorious being sitting upon His heavenly throne had created all things in His temporal mode of

being as Lord, and from eternity as God the Father He had willed to create all things.

Since we have now demonstrated that the distinction between God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ can be explained without resorting to a plurality of persons in the Godhead, we will now attempt to show that the Holy Spirit is not an additional divine person. The first clue that the Holy Spirit is not a separate person can be found in the same place we discovered the distinction between God and Lord; namely, the greetings of Paul's epistles. Certainly a man of God like Paul who possessed such an abundance of spiritual revelation (*2 Cor 12:7*) would have added the Holy Spirit to his greetings if it had been warranted; but the Holy Spirit is conspicuously missing from all of them. At this point we should explain that the reason the Spirit is not mentioned separately is because He is included as an inherent aspect of both God and Lord and therefore is not a separate entity. Furthermore, in another passage, Paul makes it very clear how the Godhead is constituted:

1 Cor 8:6 NASB yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

To Paul and his fellow believers the only being which could truly be called God is the beginning less source of everything else that exists, and that being is called the Father. They also believe that there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through or by whom all things exist. Again, we find in this passage no mention of the Holy Spirit. Surely if Paul had known that the Holy Spirit was an additional person in the Godhead, this passage would have provided the perfect opportunity for him to say so.

God is both Spirit and Word

Isa 66:1 NASB Thus says the LORD, Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest?

Jeremiah 23:24 NASB Can a man hide himself in hiding places So I do not see him?" declares the LORD. Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" declares the LORD.

These two scriptures reveal both aspects of His being. As LORD or Logos He sits enthroned in heaven and as Spirit He is omnipresent.

In verse 2 of the first chapter of Genesis we find the first mention of the Spirit of God; "the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.", and in verse 3 we find God's creative Word executing His first command: "Let there be light, and there was light."

This harmonizes with the following scriptures which declare the two aspects of God's essential being; namely Spirit and Word:

John 4:24 NASB God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

John 1:1 NASB In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (Literally, God was the Word).

There are numerous places in the Old Testament where we find instances of the Spirit of God coming upon individuals who either prophesy or are otherwise supernaturally enabled to perform mighty works for God.

We agree with Trinitarians that the Holy Spirit is not simply an impersonal force but obviously exhibits characteristics of personhood. However we will attempt to reveal through scripture His true personal identity.

In the New Testament we find many scriptures which make interchangeable references to Jesus, Holy Spirit, and Father. Here are examples:

Luke 21:14-15 NASB 14 So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; 15 for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. (Jesus)

Luke 12:11-12 NASB When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; 12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say. (Holy Spirit)

Mat 10:19-20 NASB But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. 20 For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. (Father)

Who Raised Jesus from the Dead?

Gal 1:1 NASB Paul, an apostle not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead. (Father)

Rom 8:11 NASB But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. (Spirit).

John 2:19-21 NASB Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. 20The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build

this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body. (Jesus)

The Holy Spirit Identified

In the next passage Paul explains that there is only one Spirit and one Lord, and in the passage following it he reveals that the Lord is that one Spirit.

Eph 4:4-6 NASB There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

2 Cor 3:17- 18 NASB Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

In yet another passage Paul declares that the Lord Jesus Christ became a life-giving Spirit:

1 Cor 15:45 NASB So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

At this point one might ask the question, "If the Lord is the Spirit, why did Jesus speak of the Comforter or Helper in the third person?"

Let's read all the passages in question:

John 14:16-18 NASB I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

John 15:26 NASB "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me.

John 16:7-8;13 NASB "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth;

In order to properly answer this question we need to understand that the word Comforter or Helper is used only 5 times in the New Testament and only in the Gospel of John. The reason we mention this is that in John's Gospel we find Jesus

referring to Himself in the third person on two other occasions when it is very obvious that He is speaking of Himself:

John 5:25-28 NASB "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live 26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; 27and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. 28"Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice,

John 4:10 NASB Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

Furthermore, in John 14:17-18 Jesus finally identified the Spirit of truth as himself by saying, "You know Him because He abides with you and shall be in you." Jesus made it obvious that He was abiding with His disciples in the flesh, but would, at some future time, come to them in spirit form as "another helper/comforter" and would be with them forever as the Spirit of truth. This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost as the disciples tarried in the upper room. As Peter explained:

Acts 2: 32 NASB This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

A related passage is found in John 7:37-39 NASB where Jesus prophetically declares a time when believers would receive an outpouring of the Spirit, but John informs us that this wouldn't happen until Jesus was glorified:

John 7:37-39 NASB "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet (given), because Jesus was not yet glorified.

In these two passages both Peter and John are speaking of the outpouring of the Spirit and both of them inform us that there was a prerequisite for this happening. Peter informs his hearers that Jesus had to have been exalted to the right hand of God, and John refers to this as being glorified.

Andrew Murray (1828-1917) had this to say concerning what the man Christ Jesus did to make it possible for humans to be worthy vessels of the Spirit of Promise:

...From His nature, as it was glorified in the resurrection and ascension, His Spirit came forth as the Spirit of His human life, glorified into the union with the Divine, to make us partakers of all

that He had personally wrought out and acquired, of Himself and His glorified life. In virtue of His atonement, man now had a right and title to the fulness of the Divine Spirit, and to His indwelling, as never before. And in virtue of His having perfected in Himself a new holy human nature on our behalf, He could now communicate what previously had no existence,-a life at once human and Divine. From henceforth the Spirit, just as He was the personal Divine life, could also become the personal life of men. Even as the Spirit is the personal life principle in God Himself, so He can be it in the child of God: the Spirit of God's Son can now be the Spirit that cries in our heart, Abba, Father. Of this Spirit it is most fully true, 'The Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' – Murray ,Andrew, The Spirit of Christ, Chapter 5, p 54, 1888.

Throughout this paper we have endeavored to explore the possibility of discovering an alternative to the Trinitarian dogma that is logical, coherent and scripturally sound. A close examination of all the scriptures and comments which have been presented here clearly reveals that we have attained our goal; and in the process we have discovered a likely scenario that is a simpler hypothesis. Furthermore, according to the principle of simplicity, the simplest of several hypotheses is most likely to be true.

Tit 2:11-13 NASB For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.

In His Service,

Donald W. Eames

