

Quick Quotes Concerning the Doctrine of the “Holy Trinity”

Trinitarian terms not Biblical

“It is also important to note that the New Testament speakers and writers were monotheistic Jews who expressed no thought of introducing a dramatic new revelation of a plurality in God. Neither the writers nor the readers thought in trinitarian categories; essential trinitarian terms and ideas were not formulated in New Testament times. Neither testament uses the word *trinity* or associates the words *three* or *persons* with God in any significant way. No passage says God is a holy two, holy three, or holy trinity, but over fifty verses call God the “Holy One” (Isaiah 54:5). The only New Testament passage to use the word *person* (*hypostasis*) in relation to God is Hebrews 1:3, which says the Son is the image of God’s own person (substance). Thus the terms and concepts necessary to construct the trinitarian dogma do not appear in Scripture.”

David Bernard, *The Oneness View of Jesus*, 11

The terms “God the Son” and “eternal Son” are nonbiblical; the Bible instead speaks of the “Son of God” and the “only begotten Son.” The Son is not eternally begotten by some incomprehensible, ongoing process; rather, the Son was begotten by the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary. The Son had a beginning, namely, at the Incarnation (Luke 1:35; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 1:5-6). There is a real distinction between God and the Son—not a distinction of two divine persons, but a distinction between the eternal Spirit of God and the authentic human being in whom God was fully incarnate.

David Bernard, *Oneness and Trinity* 11

The Idea of the Trinity developed gradually after the early “Church Fathers”

The writings of Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Hermas adhere closely to biblical language, usage, and thought. These writers affirmed that God is one, that Jesus Christ is the true God, and that Christ is truly human. They distinguished between God and Jesus Christ in the sense that the New Testament does, distinguishing Father and Son, the eternal Spirit and the man Christ through whom God manifested Himself. They did not see a distinction with regard to the Holy Spirit. To them the Holy Spirit was the Spirit of the one God and was Jesus Christ Himself in Spirit form. They attached great significance to the name of God and alluded to baptism in the name of Jesus. On all these points they exhibit a close affinity to modern Oneness.

Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Hermas did not describe God as a trinity or as three persons, nor did they use any other distinctively trinitarian language. Some of their statements are incompatible with trinitarianism, ancient and modern, and many sound like Oneness expressions today. (Later, in fact, trinitarian copyists were frequently uncomfortable with the language of Ignatius in particular and attempted to correct it.)

David Bernard, *Oneness and Trinity* 42-43

“In the earliest times of the Church there is little explicit or precise statement, and even less definition of the doctrine of the Trinity. . . . [In the first two centuries] the primary thought was of monotheism.”

Calvin Beisner, *God in Three Persons* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 1984), 47-48.

Among the Apostolic Fathers, there had been nothing even remotely approaching such a mentality or perspective; among the second century Apologists, little more than a focusing of the problem as that of plurality within the Godhead. . . . In the last analysis, the second century theological achievement was limited. . . . A Trinitarian solution was still in the future.

“Trinity, Holy,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 14:295-305.

Baptism in Jesus Name was the Biblical formula 6/26/11

“The formula used was ‘in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ’ or some synonymous phrase; there is no evidence for the use of the triune name.”

Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, James Hastings, ed. (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1951), 2:384.

“The evidence of Acts 2:38; 10:48 (cf. 8:16; 19:5), supported by Galatians 3:27, Romans 6:3, suggests that baptism in early Christianity was administered, not in the threefold name, but ‘in the name of Jesus Christ’ or ‘in the name of the Lord Jesus.’”

W. F. Flemington, “Baptism,” *The Interpreter’s Dictionary*, 1:351.

Although he apparently used the threefold formula, Martin Luther defended people in his day who used “the words, ‘I baptize you in the name of Jesus Christ,’” for he maintained, “It is certain the apostles used this formula in baptizing, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles.”

Martin Luther, “The Babylonian Captivity of the Church,” in *Word and Sacrament II*, vol. 36 of *Luther’s Works*, ed. Abdel Wentz (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), 63.

“Matthew 28:19 may be taken to indicate that baptism was associated with this Trinitarian formula from the earliest decades of the Church’s existence.^[4] The formula is found in the Didache,^[5] Ignatius,^[6] Tertullian,^[7] Hippolytus,^[8] Cyprian,^[9] and Gregory Thaumaturgus.^[10] Though the formula has early attestation, the Acts of the Apostles only mentions believers being baptized “in the name of Jesus Christ” (2:38, 10:48) and “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (8:16, 19:5). There are no Biblical references to baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit outside Matthew 28:19, nor references to baptism in the name of (the Lord) Jesus (Christ) outside the Acts of the Apostles.^[11]”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity#Baptism_as_the_beginning_lesson

Baptism was originally by immersion 7/31/11

1. "Baptism took place by immersion in ancient times." (New Interpretation of the Mass, p. 120).
2. "Catholics admit that immersion brings out more fully the meaning of the sacrament, and that for twelve centuries it was the common practice." (Question Box, p. 240).
3. "Baptism used to be given by placing the person to be baptized completely in the water: it was done in this way in the Catholic Church for 1200 years." (Adult Catechism, pp. 56-57).
4. "The church at one time practiced immersion. This was up to the thirteenth century. The Council of Ravenna, in 1311, changed the form from immersion to pouring." (Our Faith and the Facts, p. 399).

<http://www.bible.ca/catholic-flip-flops-baptism-immersion-sprinkling.htm>

Trinitarians often look at scripture through the creeds

A typical Catholic defense: “The early Christians were quick to spot new heresies. In the third century, Sabellius, a Libyan priest who was staying at Rome, invented a new one. He claimed there is only one person in the Godhead, so that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all one person with different "offices," rather than three persons who are one being in the Godhead, as the orthodox position holds.

Of course, people immediately recognized that Sabellius’s teaching contradicted the historic faith of the Church, and he was quickly excommunicated. His heresy became known as Sabellianism, Modalism, and Patripassianism. It was called *Sabellianism* after its founder, *Modalism* after the three modes or roles which it claimed the one person of the Trinity occupied, and *Patripassianism* after its implication that the person of the Father (*Pater-*) suffered (*-passion*) on the cross when Jesus died.

Because Modalism asserts that there is only one person in the Godhead, it makes nonsense of passages which show Jesus talking to his Father (e.g., John 17), or declaring he is *going to be* with the Father (John 14:12, 28, 16:10) One role of a person cannot *go to be* with another role of that person, or say that the two of them will *send* the Holy Spirit while *they* remain in heaven (John 14:16-17, 26, 15:26, 16:13–15; Acts 2:32–33).

Modalism quickly died out; it was too contrary to the ancient Christian faith to survive for long. Unfortunately, it was reintroduced in the early twentieth century in the new Pentecostal movement. In its new form, Modalism is often referred to as *Jesus Only* theology since it claims that Jesus is the only person in the Godhead and that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are merely names, modes, or roles of Jesus. Today the United Pentecostal Church, as well as numerous smaller groups which call themselves “Apostolic churches,” teach the *Jesus Only* doctrine. Through the Word Faith movement, it has begun to infect traditionally Trinitarian Pentecostalism. Ironically, Trinity Broadcasting Network, operated by Word Faith preacher Paul Crouch, has given a television voice to many of these *Jesus Only* preachers (who are, of course, militantly *anti*-Trinitarian).

In the quotes that follow, the Fathers’ forceful rejection of Modalism is shown not only when they condemn it by name, but also by passages in which they speak of one person of the Trinity being *with* another, being sent *from* another, or speaking *to* another. “ This author proceeds to quote church fathers, but nearly all of them are from the 2nd- 4th centuries.

http://www.catholic.com/library/God_in_Three_Persons.asp

Oneness Responses:

In the Old Catholic Age (c. A.D. 170-325), Christendom shifted from the biblical belief in one God toward a form of trinitarianism. This process had already begun with the vague binitarian and triadic formulations of the Greek Apologists in the mid to latter part of the second century, and it culminated in the promulgation of orthodox trinitarianism in the latter part of the fourth century. The evidence indicates that modalism was the dominant view of Christianity in the first part of this age. Since history is written by the victors, the existing evidence probably reveals only a fraction of the total scope. Nevertheless, it demonstrates that modalism was widespread throughout this period. Despite the sparseness of existing historical evidence, it is clear that in the Old Catholic Age many people affirmed the two central tenets of Oneness given in chapter 1 and many people baptized in the name of Jesus.

When trinitarianism did come, in the first part of the third century, it started with the premise that Jesus was a subordinate deity. Its two chief founders, Tertullian and Origen, never abandoned that belief. Only much later, in the fourth century, did trinitarians try to rectify this flaw, with only partial success, by affirming the coequality, coeternity, and consubstantiality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Not only the Greek Apologists but also the early trinitarians rejected the unqualified statement of the Bible and the writers of the Post-Apostolic Age that Jesus is God.

David Bernard, *Oneness and Trinity*. 168-169

"Tertullian was forced to admit that the majority of believers of the second century A.D. were Monarchian and not Trinitarian believers:

"To be sure, plain people, not to call them ignorant and common - of whom the greater portion of believers is always comprised - inasmuch as the rule of faith withdraws them from the many gods of the [heathen] world to the one and the true God, shrink back from the economy (the trinity) . . . They are constantly throwing out the accusation that we preach two gods and three gods . . . We hold, they say, the monarchy."

Sounds familiar! Do not Oneness Christians of today preach that those who profess a belief in three divine persons of an alleged trinity are preaching two and three gods? Since the Trinitarian writer who invented the word "Trinity" himself admitted that the majority of Christian believers were Monarchian (Oneness) in their theology in the late second century, we can convincingly assert that Trinitarians were in the minority within the first hundred years after the death of the first century apostles."

Steve Ritchie, *The Essentiality of Oneness Theology*
<http://www.onenessweb.com/apostolicpillar/articles/baptism.html>

Some Trinitarians resort to oneness terminology

"We are not going to see three Gods in heaven. . . . There is one great Lord God. We know Him as our Father, we know Him as our Saviour, we know Him as the Holy Spirit in our hearts. There is one God and this is the great God, called in the Old Testament, Jehovah, and, incarnate, called in the New Testament Jesus."

W. A. Criswell, *Expository Sermons on Revelation*(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961-66), 15
W. A. Criswell, past president of the Southern Baptist Convention

"The prayers of Jesus belong to the mystery of incarnation, not to a threefold division in God. Jesus Christ was truly human as well as divine, and out of his humanity he did pray. This is not to be understood as one God praying to another God, or one part of God praying to another part of God. It is to be understood as the prayers which came from an authentic human life, one in which God was uniquely present.

Stagg, *The Holy Spirit Today*, 11-12.

THE CATHOLIC FAITH IS THE TRINITARIAN ATHANASIAN CREED

"Whoever will be saved; before all things it is necessary that he hold THE CATHOLIC FAITH. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt he will perish everlastingly. AND THE CATHOLIC FAITH IS THIS: THAT WE WORSHIP ONE GOD IN TRINITY, AND TRINITY IN UNITY. Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit. . . And in this Trinity none is afore, or after another: none is greater or less than the other. But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and coequal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity. . ."

Baptism in Jesus Name

- Britannica Encyclopedia, 11th Edition, Volume 3, page 365 – Baptism was changed from the name of Jesus to words Father, Son & Holy Ghost in 2nd Century.
- Canney Encyclopedia of Religion, page 53 – The early church baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus until the second century.
- Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion, Volume 2 – Christian baptism was administered using the words, "in the name of Jesus." page 377. Baptism was always in the name of Jesus until time of Justin Martyr, page 389.
- Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 2, page 263 – Here the authors acknowledged that the baptismal formula was changed by their church.
- Schaff – Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, Volume 1, page 435 – The New Testament knows only the baptism in the name of Jesus.
- Hastings Dictionary of Bible, page 88 – It must be acknowledged that the three fold name of Matthew 28:19 does not appear to have been used by the primitive church, but rather in the name of Jesus, Jesus Christ or Lord Jesus.

Those called by Jesus' name will be persecuted

Matthew 10:22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Acts 3:6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

Acts 4:7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

Acts 4: 10 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. 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Acts 4:17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. 18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.