

Query #32 September 2017
The trinity doctrine
Look again

Query:

There seems to be a great fuss in the church regarding the trinity (the Catholic view versus the early Adventist pioneers opinion mostly, and accusation is made that the doctrine of the church is now faulty). Just what is the truth?

Response:

Let's start at the beginning. The word "trinity" is not in the Bible so we will need to look for something else. And the right word is "Godhead". Speaking to some Pagans, Paul said, under Inspiration:

Acts 17:

²⁸ For in Him [our Saviour] we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, "*For we are also His offspring*".

²⁹ Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think [any more] that ***the Godhead*** is like to gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device [but we should think of Him as a living Person].

³⁰ And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men everywhere to repent [change their minds]: ³¹ because He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance to all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead.

But who raised who?

Romans 1:

¹ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God, ² (which He had promised afore by His prophets in the holy scriptures,) ³ concerning His Son Jesus Christ our LORD, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh [as a human]; ⁴ and ***declared to be the Son of God*** [i.e. divine] ***with power***, according to the spirit of holiness, ***by the resurrection*** [of Himself] ***from the dead . . .***"

Jesus told us that beforehand.

John 10:17-18:

"Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man [or creature] takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself [for a purpose]. I have power to lay it down, and ***I have power to take it again***. This commandment (permission) have I received of My Father".

{EW 126.1-2}

Sorrow filled heaven as it was realized that man was lost and that the world which God had created was to be filled with mortals doomed to misery, sickness, and death, and that there was no way of escape for the offender. The whole family of Adam must die.

I then saw the lovely Jesus and beheld an expression of sympathy and sorrow upon His countenance. Soon I saw Him approach the exceeding bright light which enshrouded the Father. Said my accompanying angel, "He is in close converse with His Father."

The anxiety of the angels seemed to be intense while Jesus was communing with His Father. *Three times He was shut in by the glorious light about the Father*, and the third time He came from the Father we could see His person.

His countenance was calm, free from all perplexity and trouble, and shone with a loveliness which words cannot describe. He then made known to the angelic choir that a way of escape had been made for lost man; that He had been pleading with His Father, *and had obtained permission to give His own life as a ransom for the race*, to bear their sins, and take the sentence of death upon Himself, thus opening a way whereby they might, through the merits of His blood [life], find pardon for past transgressions, and by obedience be brought back to the garden from which they were driven. Then they could again have access to the glorious, immortal fruit of the tree of life to which they had now forfeited all right. {EW 126.1}

Then joy, inexpressible joy, filled heaven, and the heavenly choir sang a song of praise and adoration. They touched their harps and sang a note higher than they had done before, because of the great mercy and condescension of God in yielding up His dearly Beloved to die for a race of rebels. Then praise and adoration was poured forth for the self-denial and sacrifice of Jesus, in consenting to leave the bosom of His Father, and choosing a life of suffering and anguish, and an ignominious death, that He might give life to others. {EW 126.2}

This was a conference between equal partners seeking a unity of purpose.

Philippians 2:

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶ who, being in the form of God, *thought it not robbery* [not wrong] *to be equal with God*: ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸ and being found in

fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.

⁹ Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name [a position] which is above every name: ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father.

{PP 34.1-3}

The Sovereign of the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. He had an associate -- a co-worker who could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and ***the Word was God***. The same was in the beginning with God.” John 1:1, 2. Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father -- one in nature, in character, in purpose -- ***the only being that could*** enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, ***The mighty God***, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6. His “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2.

And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: “The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting . . . When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.” Proverbs 8:22-30. {PP 34.1}

The Father wrought by His Son in the creation of all heavenly beings. “By Him were all things created . . . whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him.” Colossians 1:16. Angels are God's ministers, radiant with the light ever flowing from His presence and speeding on rapid wing to execute His will. But the Son, the anointed of God, the “express image of His person,” “the brightness of His glory,” “upholding all things by the word of His power,” holds supremacy over them all. Hebrews 1:3.

“A glorious high throne from the beginning,” was the place of His sanctuary (Jeremiah 17:12); “a scepter of righteousness,” the scepter of His kingdom. Hebrews 1:8. “Honor and majesty are before Him: strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.” Psalm 96:6. Mercy and truth go before His face. Psalm 89:14. {PP 34.2}

The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love -- service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service. {PP 34.3}

This was part of the answer to the original question asked by Lucifer before his fall; "Who is this Person (Michael) who seems to get preferential treatment?" This query has been repeated throughout history. For example:

John 8:

²⁵ Then said they [some Pharisees] to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus says to them, "Even the same that I said to you from the beginning. ²⁶ I have many things to say and to judge of you: but He that sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him".

²⁷ They understood not that He spoke to them of the Father.

²⁸ Then said Jesus to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of man [i.e. My humanity on a cross], then shall you know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself [while in My humanity]; but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.

²⁹ "And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father has not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him".

³⁰ As He spoke these words, many believed on Him.

{5T 291.1}

When Satan became disaffected in heaven, he did not lay his complaint before God and Christ; but he went among the angels who thought him perfect and represented that God had done him injustice in preferring Christ to himself. The result of this misrepresentation was that through their sympathy with him *one third of the angels lost their innocence* [it was their choice], their high estate, and their happy home. Satan is instigating men to continue on earth the same work of jealousy and evil surmising that he commenced in heaven. [So 2/3rds stayed loyal.]

Romans 1:

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness [twist the truth]; ¹⁹ because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has showed it to them. ²⁰ For the invisible things of Him from the

creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power *and Godhead*; so that they are without excuse: ²¹ because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God [who did they not glorify?], neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools . . .

Colossians 2:

⁸ Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world [explaining it in man's terms], and not after Christ.

⁹ For in Him dwells *all the fulness of the Godhead* bodily.

¹⁰ And you are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power: ¹¹ in whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: ¹² buried with Him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead.

So, three times we have been told that there is a Godhead, a group of people whom we can call God. But let's be careful here to stick to what God has revealed because we are looking at *the nature of God*, a thing which is incomprehensible to us under normal circumstances for we are creatures, far below the intellect and capability of God.

In other places in the Bible He tells (and shows) us of the three personalities which comprise the Godhead.

Matthew 3:

¹¹ [John the Baptist said to the people] I indeed baptise you with water to repentance: but He that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: ¹² whose fan [of separation] is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

¹³ Then comes Jesus from Galilee to Jordan to John, to be baptised of him. ¹⁴ But John forbad him, saying, "I have need to be baptised of You, and come You to me?" ¹⁵ And Jesus answering said to him, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becomes us [as Christians] to fulfil all [the rituals of] righteousness. Then he suffered Him.

¹⁶ And Jesus, when He was baptised, went up straightway out of the water [*onto the riverbank*]: and, lo, the heavens were opened to him [John], and he saw the *Spirit of God* descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him:

¹⁷ and lo a voice *from heaven*, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”.

Luke 3:

²¹ Now when all the people were baptised, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptised, and praying, the heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Ghost descended *in a bodily shape like a dove* upon Him [thus there were two separate entities there], and a voice came from heaven [a third Person], which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased”.

John 14:

¹⁵ [Jesus said:] If you love Me, keep My commandments.

¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you *another* Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; ¹⁷ even the *Spirit of truth*; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him [if you have been born again]; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you.

¹⁸ I will not leave you comfortless [forever]: I will come to [back for] you.

¹⁹ Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but you see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. ²⁰ At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you . . .

²⁵ These things have I spoken to you, being yet present with you. ²⁶ But the *Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost*, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you.

²⁷ Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you: not as the world gives, give I to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

²⁸ You have heard how I said to you, I go away, and come again to you. If you loved Me, you would rejoice, because I said, I go to the Father: for My Father is greater than I.

John 1:

³² And John bare record, saying, “I *saw the Spirit* descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. ³³ And I knew Him not [physically]: but He that sent me to baptise with water, the Same said to me, ‘Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the Same is He which baptizes with the Holy Ghost’.

³⁴ “And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God”.

Acts 1:

³ To whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion [crucifixion] by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: ⁴ and, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, says He, you have heard of Me. ⁵ For John truly baptised with water; but you shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Matthew 28:

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but some doubted.

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹ Go you therefore, and teach all nations, ***baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*** ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Amen”.

Now, all those verses are in the New Testament, but the early Christians were nearly all Jews and they loved their Old Testament Bible and when these things occurred there was no New Testament. So they had to be persuaded from those Scriptures. And so can we.

We all believe that the Son of God was the one who spoke the universe into existence so let's go back there and look.

Genesis 1:

¹ In the beginning [the Son of] God created the heaven and the earth.

² And the earth was without [definite] form [being under restless water], and void [of life]; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And ***the Spirit of God*** moved [sometimes translated as “fluttered”] upon the face of the waters.

³ And [the Son of] God said, Let there be Light: and there was Light.
[He is called LORD God in Genesis 2:4.]

Regarding the Spirit, we are told:

Genesis 6:

³ And the LORD [God] said, “My ***Spirit*** shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years”.

Genesis 41:

³⁸ And Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the *Spirit of God* is?” [The Pagans recognised His presence!]

Numbers 11:

²⁶ But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and *the Spirit rested upon them* [as at Jesus’ baptism]; and they were of them that were written [they were on the list, Numbers 11:16-17], but went not out to the tabernacle [they did not think themselves worth of such an honour]: and [therefore] they prophesied in the camp [and not in the sanctuary grounds].

Judges 3:

⁹ And when the children of Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. ¹⁰ And *the Spirit of the LORD* came upon him, and he judged [led] Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim.

Judges 6:

³⁴ But the *Spirit of the LORD* came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him.

Nehemiah 9:

²⁰ You gave also Your *good Spirit* to instruct them, and withheld not Your manna from their mouth, and gave them water for their thirst.

²¹ Yes, forty years did You sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.

But we all know what happened over and over again:

Isaiah 63:

⁸ For He said, “Surely they are My people, children that will not lie [and will admit that they cannot do good]”: so He [the LORD God] was their Saviour.

⁹ In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them [time and time again]: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

¹⁰ But they rebelled, and *vexed His holy Spirit*: therefore He was [eventually and reluctantly] turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them [had to withdraw most of His protection]. ¹¹ Then He remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, “Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock [Moses]? Where is He that put His *Holy Spirit* within him”?

What we should have seen by now is that two of Them worked together right through the Old Testament times. God the Father is rarely mentioned throughout its length but that does not mean to us that He does not exist.

So why does Moses say?

Deuteronomy 6:

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

⁵ And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.

Look prayerfully at the words and you will see that he is talking about the LORD God our Saviour, and he was telling the people the position that that one Person should have in our hearts.

Mark 12:

²⁸ And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, “Which is the first commandment of all?”

²⁹ And Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The LORD our God is one LORD: ³⁰ and you shall *love the LORD* your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength: this is the first commandment.

³¹ “And the second is like, namely this, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’. There is none other commandment greater than these”.

³² And the scribe said to Him, “Well, Master, You have said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He: ³³ and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices”.

Look again at all the times the LORD or the LORD God is mentioned in the Old Testament and you will begin to understand that when sin first arose in heaven the Father, after trying to *explain by talking* of His son’s position to the universe, gave Him the job of *demonstrating* it through our world (in both testaments). (See PP 35.1-43.1 for more.)

Thus we have these words in Paul’s letter to the Christian Jews:

Hebrews 1:

¹ God, who at sundry [various] times and in divers [different] manners spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days [of Jewish history] spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir [manager] of all things, by whom also He made the worlds;

³ Who being the brightness of His glory [His character], and the express image of His person [John 14:7-11], and upholding all things by the word of *His* power, when He had *by Himself* purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; ⁴ being made [in the eyes of the universe] so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name [position] than they.

⁵ For to which of the angels said He at any time, “You are My Son, this day have I begotten You?” [Which day?]

[Psalm 2:

¹ Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? ² The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against His anointed, saying, ³ “Let us break Their bands asunder, and cast away Their cords from us [by crucifying the Son. Matthew 21:38.]”

⁴ He that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision. ⁵ Then shall He speak to them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure [with the words]; ⁶ “Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion [in Jerusalem, and your action has established My truth]”.

⁷ [The Son then confirmed His Father’s statement] “I will declare the decree: the LORD [the Father] has said to Me, “You are My Son; *this day* have I begotten you [on earth]. ⁸ Ask of Me, and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession”.]

Peter used that scripture in a talk about Jesus:

[Acts 13:

³² And [Peter said] we declare to you [Jews] glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, ³³ God has fulfilled the same to us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, “You are My Son, this day [of the resurrection] have I begotten You”.

³⁴ And as concerning that He raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, “I will give you the sure mercies of David”.

³⁵ Wherefore he [David] says also in another psalm, “You shall not suffer Your Holy One to see corruption” [Psalm 16:10]. ³⁶ For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep [died], and was laid to his fathers, and [his body] saw corruption: ³⁷ but He, whom [the power of the] God [of Life] raised again, saw no corruption.]

[There should be no problem with the “God” who resurrected Him, for the Letter to the Hebrews carries on and declares the Son to also be called God as part of the Godhead, as does Isaiah!!]

{AA 333.1}

Point after point Paul lingered over, in order that those who should read his epistle might fully comprehend the wonderful condescension of the Saviour in their behalf. Presenting Christ as He was *when equal with God and with Him receiving the homage of the angels*, the apostle traced His course until He had reached the lowest depths of humiliation [in chapter 2]. Paul was convinced that if they could be brought to comprehend the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, all selfishness would be banished from their lives. He showed how the Son of God had laid aside His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to the conditions of human nature, and then had humbled Himself as a servant, becoming obedient unto death, “even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8), that He might lift fallen man from degradation to hope and joy and heaven.

Continuing in the letter, we read:

Hebrews 1:

^{5b} And again, “I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?”

⁶ And again, when He brings in the firstbegotten into the world, He says, “And let all the angels of God worship Him [as God is worshipped]”.

⁷ And of the angels He says, “Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire [workers]”. ⁸ But to the Son He says, “Your throne, *O God*, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity [by nature]; therefore God, even your God, has anointed [publicly demonstrated by blessing] You with the oil of gladness *above* Your fellows. [Compare Leviticus 8:12.]

¹⁰ And, You, LORD, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Your hands: ¹¹ they shall perish; but You remain; and they all shall wax old as does a garment; ¹² and as a vesture shall You fold them up, and they shall be changed: but You are the same, and Your years shall not fail [You have everlasting life]”.

¹³ But to which of the angels said He at any time, “Sit on My right hand [the position of power], until I make [declare, Mark 13:32] Your enemies Your footstool? [i.e. that You have conquered them.]” ¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

And Ellen White says:

{6BC 1074.9}

In the first chapter of Second Peter is presented the progressive work in the Christian life [sanctification]. The whole chapter is a lesson of deep importance.

If man, in acquiring the Christian graces, works on the plan of addition, God has pledged Himself to work in his behalf upon the plan of multiplication. "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."

The work is laid out before every soul that has acknowledged his faith in Jesus Christ by baptism, and has become a receiver of *the pledge from the three persons -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit* (MS 57, 1900).

The Great Controversy p524. [1911]

If men reject the testimony of the inspired Scriptures concerning the deity of Christ, it is in vain to argue the point with them; for no argument, however conclusive, could convince them.

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:14. None who hold this error can have a true conception of the character or the mission of Christ, or of the great plan of God for man's redemption. -- {7ABC 440.2}

P.S. [Click here to find a comprehensive list of what she had to say on the matter.](#)

Conclusion:

All the discussions regarding what the fathers believed about the trinity versus what the church or the Catholics do today are pointless. We just need to know what God says and it becomes clear.

Who wants to add (or subtract!) from these thoughts? I won't argue as I have stated, but I will publish your Scriptures so that we may review all the words of God on the subject.

Next query. To be discussed from October 1st, 2017

Should we keep the Old Testament feasts today? Do we receive a greater blessing if we do, and are we lost if we don't, as some are teaching?

For contact:

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To see the list of some my past queries, [click here](#).

To see past queries and my responses, [click here](#).