

Yes, You Should Believe in the Trinity!!!

—A page-by-page response to the Watchtower’s brochure, “*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*”

INTRODUCTION: WHY YOU SHOULD BELIEVE IN IT

“Do YOU believe in the Trinity? Most people in Christendom do. After all, it has been the central doctrine of the churches for centuries. ...Why should a subject like this be of any more than passing interest? Because Jesus himself said: ‘**Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.**’ So our entire future hinges on our knowing the true nature of God, and that means getting to the root of the Trinity controversy.” —*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, 1989, p. 3

It has often been said that every theological heresy begins with a misconception of the nature of God. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that we have a clear and accurate understanding of the nature of God and the identity of Jesus Christ, for Scripture declares:

“But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, **your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.** For if one comes and preaches **another Jesus** whom we have not preached, or you receive a **different spirit** which you have not received, or a **different gospel** which you have not accepted, you bear *this* beautifully.”
—2 Corinthians 11:3-4

“For no man can lay a **foundation** other than the one which is laid, which is **Jesus Christ.**”
—1 Corinthians 3:11

“I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; **for unless you believe that I am *He*, you shall die in your sins.**”—John 8:24

At John 8:24, Jesus proclaims the seriousness of not believing He is who He claimed to be. He states: “...unless you believe that **I am *He***, you shall die in your sins.” The reason the word “He” is italicized in the statement “I am *He*” is due to the fact that it is not found in the Greek text from which our English translations are derived. Thus, Jesus is literally proclaiming that He is the “I AM” of Exodus 3:14: “And God said to Moses, ‘**I AM WHO I AM**;...Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you.’” This is significant when we consider the fact that Scripture also proclaims that we must call on the name of Jesus in order to “wash away” our sins:

“And now why do you delay? ‘Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, **calling upon His name**....to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place **call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**, their *Lord* and ours.”—Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 1:2

What does it mean to “call upon the name of Jehovah” (Romans 10:13, *NWT*)? Every Jehovah’s Witness would testify that when Scripture states that we are to call upon the name of Jehovah, we are addressing our prayers directly to Jehovah God. In the same way, if someone states that he is “calling

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upon the devil,” he is proclaiming that he is praying to Satan. Thus, when Scripture states that we must “call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” in order to have our sins pardoned, it is literally compelling us to address our prayers directly to Jesus, asking Him to be our Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9).

What brings one into a true relationship with Christ is not just “taking in knowledge” about the Father and Jesus. John 17:3 states, “And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old And New Testament Words* notes that the Greek word translated “know” (γινωσκω—*ginosko*) in this passage “**frequently indicates a relation between the person ‘knowing’ and the object known; in this respect, what is ‘known’ is of value or importance to the one who knows, and hence the establishment of the relationship....such ‘knowledge’ is obtained, not by mere intellectual activity, but by operation of the Holy Spirit consequent upon acceptance of Christ.**”¹ This is illustrated by the following true story:

One day in 1860, a huge crowd of people gathered to watch the famous tightrope walker, Blondin, cross Niagara Falls. It was a 1,000-foot trip, 160 feet above the raging water. The crowd followed every movement tensely. Step by step he moved forward. The people on the shore reacted nervously to every sharp motion of the balancing pole. But their fears and forebodings were unnecessary; the great Blondin not only went across safely but returned as well—to the great relief and admiration of the people.

Turning to the audience, he now made a sensational offer. He would cross the falls again, this time with someone on his back! Who was willing to go? No one rushed forward to accept the offer. Picking out a man at random, Blondin asked, “Do you believe that I am able to carry you across?” “Yes, sir,” came the unhesitating reply. “Well, then, let’s go,” Blondin urged. “Not on your life!”—and the man withdrew into the crowd.

And so it went. One after another expressed great confidence in the tightrope walker, but they would not agree to let him take them across. Finally a young fellow moved toward the front of the crowd. Blondin repeated his question: “Do you believe I can carry you across safely?” “Yes, I do.” “Are you willing to let me?” “As a matter of fact, I am.”

The young man climbed onto the expert’s back. Blondin stepped onto the rope, paused momentarily, then moved across the falls without difficulty. There were many in the crowd who believed that Blondin could do it. But there was only one who was willing to trust him to do it.

It is one thing to believe a number of facts about a person; it is quite another thing to trust yourself to that person. For instance, there are many who believe the basic facts about the Lord Jesus Christ: He is the eternal Son of God, lived a perfect, sinless life, paid the price not only for Adamic sin, but for all of our own personal sins (1 Peter 2:24), resurrected and returned to Heaven. Many believe that Jesus offers us the “free gift” of eternal life (Romans 6:23), and that He offers us His perfection in exchange for all

¹ *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old And New Testament Words*, 1985, (Thomas Nelson Publishers), p. 346

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our own personal sins (Colossians 3:3), yet they have never gone directly to Jesus and asked Him to be righteous for them (Acts 22:16). Many believe Jesus **can** save them, but they do not let Him do it. Every person needs to come to the place where he is willing to “lay on the back of Jesus” and let Jesus carry him across the cavern of sin into the presence of the Father being clothed in Christ’s righteousness alone.

“Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the LORD said to Satan, ‘The LORD rebuke you, Satan!’...Now **Joshua was clothed with filthy garments** and standing before the angel. And he spoke and said to those who were standing before him saying, ‘**Remove the filthy garments from him.**’ Again he said to him, ‘**See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.**’ ” —Zechariah 3:1-4

Belief in facts about the Father and Jesus, regular attendance at meetings and field service² does not bring a person into a proper relationship with Jehovah God anymore than being in a garage makes a person an automobile. To come into a proper relationship with Christ, one must first acknowledge that he is under a **double** condemnation of death not only due to Adamic sin, but due to all his own personal sins and that there is **nothing** he can do to **earn** Jehovah God’s eternal life (Ephesians 2:8-9), for “all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment” in Jehovah’s sight (Isaiah 64:6). Then, he must transfer his trust to Christ.

Just like the man who crossed the rope with Blondin had to lay his full weight on Blondin’s back and let him **carry** him across, we must place our full trust in Christ alone. If the man who crossed the rope with Blondin insisted on “doing his part” by walking behind Blondin instead of letting Blondin carry him, he surely would have fallen.

In the same way, we must trust Christ alone or we will “fall from grace” (Galatians 5:4), for we “stumble in many ways” (James 3:2). “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Only the people who have gone directly to Jesus, asking Him to impart to them His righteousness in exchange for their sins (Hebrews 10:10, 14) are the ones who have transferred their complete trust to Him and as a result have come into a personal relationship with Christ. It is my prayer that as you read this book, you will not only grow in your knowledge of God, but that your relationship with Christ will deepen as a result of a greater understanding of “our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

This book is written to provide a detailed Biblical and scholarly response to the Watchtower Society’s arguments against the Trinity set forth in their brochure, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?* As the chapters of this book correspond with the major sections in the Society’s brochure, what follows is a page-by-page analysis of the Society’s claims along with supporting documentation which demonstrate the Society’s deceptive misrepresentation of many facts concerning the doctrine of the Trinity.

² “Field service” is the Watchtower term for going door-to-door.

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WHAT IS THE TRINITY?

The Trinity is the view that the 3 Persons mentioned in the Bible: Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit are one God, equal in nature and eternal and uncreated in substance. They co-exist, co-create and co-rule this present world and are distinct in their personhood, yet they share their eternal nature as the one and only True God. Jehovah's Witnesses deny the Trinity doctrine and argue against the Deity of Jesus Christ based on a misconception of what the Trinity Doctrine is and what it stands for. Below we will examine their arguments in-depth as we discuss their 1989 publication, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*

WATCHTOWER ARGUMENT:

“Here Jesus shows that he and the Father, that is, Almighty God, must be **two distinct entities**, for how else could there truly be two witnesses? ...**Was God saying that he was his own son**, that he approved himself, that he sent himself? No....**To whom was he praying? To a part of himself?** No....To whom was Jesus crying out? To himself or to part of himself? ...If you appear in someone else’s presence, **how can you be that person?** You cannot. You must be different and separate....**Someone who is ‘with’ another person cannot also be that other person.**”
—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 17-19, 27

The Athanasian Creed which most clearly defines the historical view of the Trinity states:

“...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, and another of the Holy Ghost.** But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: **the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.** Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three Eternals, but one Eternal. As there are not three Uncreated nor three Incomprehensibles, but one Uncreated and one Incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty. And yet they are not three Almighty, but one Almighty. **So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God....And in this Trinity none is before or after other; none is greater or less than another;** But the whole three Persons are coeternal together, and coequal: so that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and **the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped.** He, therefore, that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity. Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also **believe faithfully the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.** For the right faith is, that we believe and confess that **our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.** God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world; **Perfect God and perfect Man,** of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. **Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the**

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Father as touching His manhood; Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ: One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God; **One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person.** For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation; descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead....”—*The Creed of Athanasius, Written Against the Arians*¹

3 DEFINING PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY:

1. THE TRINITY IS NOT MODALISM: THE VIEW THAT THE FATHER, SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE ONE PERSON

“Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance....”
—*Athanasian Creed*

Since Trinitarians do not believe that the Father and the Son are the same person, the Watchtower argument that the Trinity is unreasonable because Jesus wasn’t praying to “a part of himself” has no basis in reality. This Watchtower argument serves to confuse the issue by misstating what Trinitarians believe. Such is also the case with the Society’s frequent statement of “not a **part** of a Trinity” in reference to the Holy Spirit². Trinitarians maintain that while each person of the Trinity is “distinct” in His personhood, each person is undiminished Deity, and thus each is considered individually in His person full God—not 1/3 God. Rather than being divided into three parts, God is revealed as a composite being who is “one,”³ and who refers to Himself in singular terms such as “I” and “myself.” Walter Martin founder of the Christian Research Institute described the mathematics of the Trinity as not being $1+1+1=3$, but rather, $1X1X1=1$.⁴

2. THE TRINITY IS NOT TRITHEISM: THE VIEW THAT THE FATHER, SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE THREE “GODS”

“So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.”—*Athanasian Creed*

The phrase “persons of the Trinity” is **not** used to refer to separate existence as individuals—as is the case when one refers to a father, son, and grandson. On the contrary, when speaking of the Trinity, the term “person” is employed to designate the **relationship** between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each has a mind, will, and emotions and each are keenly aware of the others, speak of the others, and honor

¹ Quoted in *Christianity In Crisis*, by Hank Hanegraaf, 1993, (Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR), pp. 376-377

² See pages 16-20 of *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*

³ See Deuteronomy 6:4

⁴ “God is not triplex (1+1+1)—He is triune (1X1X1), and he has revealed Himself fully in the Person of our Lord, Jesus Christ (Col. 2:9, John 14:9).” —CRI tract: *Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Trinity*

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the others. Hence, it is in this sense that the Triune God is described as being three separate and distinct “persons.”

3. IN THE TRINITY “NONE IS BEFORE OR AFTER OTHER; NONE IS GREATER OR LESS THAN ANOTHER”:

“Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood; Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ...One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person.” — *Athanasian Creed*

Prior to the incarnation, Jesus was one in person and one in nature. Although retaining His full Deity as God, at the incarnation, Jesus took on an additional nature—the nature of man—and henceforth became two in nature while yet remaining one in person.⁵ Even though attributes of His Divine and human natures are attributed to His one person, His natures are not mixed; neither is He half man and half God, but is “one altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person.” In His Divine nature, Jesus is “equal” to the Father, but in His humanity, He is “inferior to the Father” and is therefore in complete subjection to the will of the Father. Operating under the limitations of His humanity, Jesus was able to experience the trials and temptations common to man, live a perfect, sinless life, and offer His life as an atoning sacrifice for sin.⁶ As the God-man, He offers His free **gift** of eternal life⁷ to all who receive Him on the basis of faith alone.⁸

“BEYOND THE GRASP OF HUMAN REASON”

“Many sincere believers have found it to be confusing, contrary to normal reason, unlike anything in their experience. How, they ask, could the Father be God, Jesus be God, and the holy spirit be God, yet there be not three Gods but only one God? ...THIS confusion is widespread. *The Encyclopedia Americana* notes that the doctrine of the Trinity is considered to be ‘beyond the grasp of human reason.’ Many who accept the Trinity view it that same way....Jesuit Joseph Bracken...says: ‘The Trinity is a matter of formal belief, but it has **little or no [effect] in day-to-day Christian life and worship.**’ ...divine revelation itself does not allow for such a view of God: ‘**God is not a God of confusion.**’—1 Corinthians 14:33, *Revised Standard Version* (RS). In view of that statement, would God be responsible for a doctrine about himself that is so confusing...?”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 4-5

The Watchtower Society argues that God cannot be the author of the doctrine of the Trinity because it is confusing and 1 Corinthians 14:33 states that “God is not a God of confusion.” Is this a valid argument?

⁵ See Philippians 2:6-7

⁶ Hebrews 4:15 c.f. James 1:13; Philippians 2:5-6; Romans 5:8; Colossians 2:13-15

⁷ Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:11-13; 1 John 1:9

⁸ Romans 3:28; 4:4-8; 11:6; Galatians 5:4; Philippians 3:9; Colossians 3:3

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A look at the context of 1 Corinthians 14 reveals that this passage is dealing with **unity among the believers** in the church at Corinth. The fact that finite human beings cannot fully comprehend the infinite God and may experience confusion when endeavoring to understand Him does not change the fact that “God is not *a God* of confusion **but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.**” While many Catholic and even some Protestant Trinitarians admit that the doctrine of the Trinity can be confusing and hard to comprehend, is this a valid reason for rejecting it? The Society’s book *Reasoning from the Scriptures* states:

“Did God have a beginning? Ps. 90:2: ‘Before the mountains themselves were born...even from time indefinite to time indefinite you are God.’ *Is that reasonable? Our minds cannot fully comprehend it. But that is not a sound reason for rejecting it. Consider examples: (1) Time. ...We do not reject the idea of time because there are aspects of it that we do not fully comprehend....The same principle applies to the existence of God....Should we really expect to understand everything* about a Person who is so great that he could bring into existence the universe, with all its intricate design and stupendous size?”—*Reasoning from the Scriptures*, 1989, pp. 148-149

How can the finite fully comprehend the infinite? Just as the Watchtower Society admits, there are aspects of God that we cannot fully comprehend. Therefore, one should not reject a quality of God simply on the basis that the concept may be “beyond the grasp of human reason.”

“For now we see in a mirror **dimly**, but then **face to face**; **now I know in part**, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known....as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are **some things hard to understand....**”—I Corinthians 13:12; 2 Peter 3:16

Although the Trinity cannot be totally comprehended by the human mind, it can be **apprehended** and seen illustrated in the world of nature. Take, for example, an illustration involving three candles. Even after each candle is lit, the flames are separate and distinct. However, when one combines each of the three flames together, they become one flame. Since we know from Scripture that God is spirit (John 4:24), is it inconceivable to fathom the three persons of the Trinity (who are of Divine essence) being united as one composite Being who is Jehovah God? Just as three separate flames can unite into one flame, it is in this way that one can **apprehend** how each member of the Trinity is separate and distinct—yet one God. *The Encyclopedia Americana* made the following statement regarding this principle:

“It is held that although the doctrine is beyond the grasp of human reason, it is, like many of the formulations of physical science, not contrary to reason, and may be apprehended (though it may not be comprehended) by the human mind.”—*The Encyclopedia Americana*, vol. 27, p. 116

Concerning the practical significance of the Trinity, Robert M. Bowman comments:

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“One of the complaints expressed by the JW booklet, through quotations from the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* and from Catholic theologian Joseph Bracken, is that the doctrine of the Trinity seems impractical and irrelevant, even to many people who believe in the Trinity (p. 4). It is true that in many churches today, appreciation for the Trinity is very low, even where it is formally acknowledged as true. But generally these same churches show little appreciation for the relevance of the Bible to their lives despite their church’s official recognition of the Bible as God’s Word. This is especially true in many Roman Catholic congregations (though not quite in all). **Thus, their failure to appreciate the Trinity is no more a disproof of the truth of that doctrine than their failure to appreciate the Bible is a disproof of its truth as God’s Word.** The fact is that where the Trinity is not simply given lip service, but, as the Athanasian Creed puts it, where the people ‘*worship* one God in Trinity,’ the doctrine has tremendous significance and relevance. Trinitarians have the assurance that the one who saved them, Jesus Christ, was no less than God himself. They also rejoice to know that it is God himself, in the person of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in their hearts.”—*Why You Should Believe in the Trinity*, 1989, pp. 18-19

The doctrine of the Trinity bears even more significance when one recognizes that Jesus claimed that one must go directly to Him in order to obtain the free gift of eternal life.

“If you **ask Me** anything in My name, **I will do it**. ‘...wash away your sins, calling on His [Jesus’] name.’ ...You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that **bear witness of Me**; and you are unwilling to **come to Me**, that you may have life.... Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; he who **comes to Me** shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst....All that the Father gives Me shall **come to Me**, and the one who **comes to Me** I will certainly not cast out....No one can **come to Me**, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day....Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, **comes to Me**.’—John 14:14; Acts 22:16; John 5:39-40; 6:35, 37, 44-45

Since Jehovah is the only true God, He is the only one we should worship. Since prayer is a form of worship, the only way prayer can rightfully be rendered to Christ is if He is indeed Jehovah God.

“IS IT CLEARLY A BIBLE TEACHING?”

“**First-century believers accepted the Scriptures as the authentic revelation of God. It was the basis for their beliefs, the final authority....**Since the Bible can ‘set things straight,’ it should clearly reveal information about a matter as fundamental as the Trinity is claimed to be. **But do theologians and historians themselves say that it is clearly a Bible teaching? ...**A PROTESTANT publication states: ‘**The word Trinity is not found in the Bible...It did not find a place formally in the theology of the church till the 4th century.**’ (*The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*) And a Catholic authority says that the Trinity ‘**is not...directly and immediately [the] word of God.**’—*New Catholic Encyclopedia*.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 5

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Endeavoring to appeal to the scholarly community for credibility, the Watchtower Society quotes statements from Catholic, Protestant, and secular authorities throughout their brochure. While they frequently state the title of the books being quoted, one will search this brochure in vain to find the volumes and page numbers from which these quotes are derived. Furthermore, upon examination of the original sources of these quotes, it is evident that the Society has misrepresented these scholars in an attempt to solicit scholarly support for their position. Let’s take a moment and examine some of the Society’s quotes in context. (Note that throughout this book, the underlined sections of quoted text highlight the portions of text that the Watchtower Society quoted out of context.)

“The word Trinity is not found in the Bible, and though used by Tertullian in the last decade of the 2nd century, it did not find a place formally in the theology of the church till the 4th century. ...Though it is not a biblical doctrine in the sense that any formulation of it can be found in the Bible, it can be seen to underlie the revelation of God, implicit in the OT and explicit in the NT.”—*The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, part 3, p. 1597

“The 4th-century articulation of the triadic mystery is at least implicitly the word of God, hence part of the Christian credo. On the other hand, it is not, as already seen, directly and immediately word of God.”—*The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 14, p. 304

The key words in these quotations are “formulation,” “implicit,” and “explicit.” What these and many other scholars are saying is that while one cannot find a **formula** for the doctrine of the Trinity **explicitly** stated in the Bible, the concepts which provide the **basis** for the doctrine are clearly manifest. Thus, “the triadic mystery is at least **implicitly the word of God.**”

TESTIMONY OF THE HEBREW AND GREEK SCRIPTURES

“WHILE the word, ‘Trinity’ is not found in the Bible, is at least the *idea* of the Trinity taught clearly in it? For instance, what do the Hebrew Scriptures (‘Old Testament’) reveal?”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 6

While it is true that the word “Trinity” is not in the Bible, this does not mean that it is not a Biblical concept. The word “omniscient” is not in the Bible; yet, one would not deny the fact that God is omniscient (all-knowing) simply because the word is not in the Bible. Indeed, the concept of God’s omniscience can be found throughout the Old and New Testaments, and the same can be said about the doctrine of the Trinity.

At this point, the Society continues to misrepresent scholars endeavoring to make it appear that the scholarly community supports their assertion that the doctrine of the Trinity is not found in either the Old or New Testaments. We will now examine these quotes in their proper contexts:

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THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGION:

While *The Encyclopedia of Religion* states that “theologians today are in agreement that the Hebrew Bible does not contain a doctrine of the Trinity” and “theologians agree that the New Testament also does not contain an **explicit** doctrine of the Trinity,” it goes on to discuss “binitarian texts” and the fact that many passages convey the concept of the Trinity as “God takes on flesh in Christ” and that the doctrine of the Trinity’s “**origins may legitimately be sought in the Bible. ...What the scriptures narrate as the activity of God...is the wellspring of later trinitarian doctrine.**”

—*The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 15, p. 54

NEW CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA:

While the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* claims that “The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is not taught in the OT,” it goes on to state:

“In the NT the oldest evidence is in the Pauline epistles, especially 2 Cor 13.13, and 1 Cor 12.4-6. In the Gospels evidence of the Trinity is found explicitly only in the baptismal formula of Mt 28.19....In many places of the OT, however, expressions are used in which some of the Fathers of the Church saw references or foreshadowings of the Trinity....the minds of God’s people were being prepared for the concepts that would be involved in the forthcoming revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity.”

—*New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 14, p. 306

THE TRIUNE GOD, by Jesuit Edmund Fortman:

Although Fortman states that “the Old Testament...tells us nothing **explicitly** or by necessary implication of a Triune God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit...There is no evidence that any sacred writer even suspected the existence of a divine paternity and filiation within the Godhead....Even to see in them suggestions or foreshadowings or ‘veiled signs’ of the trinity of persons, is to go beyond the words and intent of the sacred writers,”⁹ he qualifies his statements with:

“Perhaps it can be said that some of these writings about word and wisdom and spirit did provide a climate in which plurality within the Godhead was conceivable to the Jews. However, these writers definitely do give us the words that the New Testament uses to express the trinity of persons, Father, Son, Word, Wisdom, Spirit.”

—*The Triune God*, 1972, p. 9

Concerning the New Testament, the Society quoted **part** of Jesuit Fortman’s statements, but notice the following section which they left out of their quote:

⁹ *The Triune God*, by Edmund J. Fortman, 1972, (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI), pp. xv, 8-9

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“If we take the New Testament writers together they tell us there is **only one God**, the creator and lord of the universe....They call Jesus the Son of God, Messiah, Lord, Savior, Word, Wisdom. They assign Him the **divine functions** of creation, salvation, judgment. **Sometimes they call Him God explicitly....They give us in their writings a triadic ground plan and triadic formulas....They give us no formal or formulated doctrine of the Trinity, no explicit teaching that in one God there are three co-equal divine persons. But they do give us an elemental trinitarianism, the data from which such a formal doctrine of the Triune God may formulated.**”—*Triune God*, pp. xv-xvi

THE NEW ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA:

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica correctly admits that “Neither the word Trinity nor the explicit doctrine appears in the New Testament....”, but it goes on to prove that even though the “explicit doctrine” is not stated, it is implied in the pages of Scripture. **“Thus, the New Testament established the basis for the doctrine of the Trinity.”**—*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 11, p. 928

“PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN KARL BARTH”:

According to the *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Karl Barth (1886-1968) was a “Swiss theologian” who studied “under some of the **great liberal scholars** of the day.”¹⁰ Since liberal theologians tend to deny fundamental doctrines of Christianity, it is not unusual that one would find a liberal scholar making the statement that: “The Bible lacks the express declaration that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are of equal essence.”¹¹ In spite of this, however, Barth still admitted, “The **basis of theology is thus the living Trinity Itself**. The Word of God is not a thing or an object, but God Himself speaking.”¹² The point Barth made in his book is that while the Bible lacks the “express declaration” of the Trinity, “the NT **does contain** the fixed, three-part formula of 2 Cor. 13:13 (Evv 14) in which God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit are mentioned together (cf. 1 Cor. 12:4 ff.). **The Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit occurs** only in the baptismal formula in Matt. 28:19.”¹³

Is it any wonder that in the Watchtower Society’s brochure, they do not list any of the page numbers from which their quotes are derived? As is readily seen, when one examines these quotes in their original context, these scholars are **not** saying that the Trinity doctrine is foreign to Scripture, but rather, that Scripture provides the “basis” from which the Trinity doctrine is “formulated.” Although the doctrine of the Trinity is not **explicitly** stated, it is most certainly **implied** within the pages of Scripture.

¹⁰ *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 1978 (J.D. Douglas, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI) p. 107

¹¹ *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 1976, vol. 2, (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI) p. 84

¹² *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 1978 (J.D. Douglas, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI) p. 107

¹³ *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2, p. 84

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“DID the early Christians teach the Trinity? Note the following comments by historians and theologians:... ‘At first the Christian faith was not Trinitarian...It was not so in the apostolic and sub-apostolic ages, as reflected in the N[ew] T[estament] and other early Christian writings.’—*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.*”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 6-7

The following is the complete quote from this encyclopedia in context:

“Economic and essential trinity.—(a) The **transition** from the **Trinity of experience** to the **Trinity of dogma** is describable in other terms as the transition from the **economic** or dispensational Trinity (τροπος αποκαλυψεως) **to the essential, immanent, or ontological Trinity** (τροπος υπαρξεως). At first the Christian faith was not Trinitarian in the strictly ontological reference. It was not so in the apostolic and sub-apostolic ages, as reflected in the NT and other early Christian writings....It should be observed that **there is no real cleavage or antithesis between** the doctrines of the **economic** and the **essential Trinity**, and naturally so. The Triunity represents the effort to **think out** the Trinity, and so to afford it a reasonable basis.”
—*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 12, p. 461

What this scholar is basically saying is that while the early Christians had a rudimentary understanding of the nature of the Triune God as they **experienced** Him (“economic or dispensational Trinity”) through His dealings with mankind throughout the Old and New Testaments, it wasn’t until subsequent centuries that they were more capable of articulating **ontologically** their understanding of the Triune God through the formulation of the Christian creeds (“ontological Trinity”). Indeed, as this encyclopedia states, “there is no real...**antithesis** between the doctrines of the **economic** [“Trinity of experience”] and the essential Trinity [“Trinity of dogma”]” as the “Triunity [“ontological” or “essential” Trinity] represents the effort to think out the Trinity, and so to afford it a reasonable basis.”

“WHAT THE ANTE-NICENE FATHERS TAUGHT”

“THE ante-Nicene Fathers were acknowledged to have been leading religious teachers in the early centuries after Christ’s birth. What they taught is of interest.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?* p. 7

In order to establish a basis for their existence, every heretical group which claims to be “true Christianity” asserts that Christianity as we know it today has become so apostate and full of paganism that unless one disassociates himself from his religion and joins their group, he cannot be saved. Note the following statements found in various issues of *The Watchtower*:

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“And while now the witness yet includes the invitation to **come to Jehovah’s organization for salvation....**”—*The Watchtower*, November 15, 1981, p. 21

“Unless we are in touch with this **channel of communication** that God is using, we will **not progress** along the road to life, **no matter how much Bible reading we do.**” —*The Watchtower*, December 1, 1981, p. 27

“Such thinking is an **evidence of pride....**If we get to thinking that **we know better than the organization**, we should ask ourselves: ‘Where did we learn Bible truth in the first place? **Would we know the way of the truth if it had not been for guidance from the organization?** Really, can we get along without the direction of God’s organization?’ **No, we cannot!**”
—*The Watchtower*, January 15, 1983, p. 27

While the Mormon church claims that their prophet Joseph Smith was called to “restore” true Christianity to the earth as it was uniquely revealed to Joseph through revelations and visions, the Watchtower Society teaches that although the majority of Christianity apostatized, Jehovah God has always sustained a remnant of true followers on earth throughout the centuries. Thus, the Watchtower Society maintains that their Governing Body is comprised of members of this “remnant” class who serve as God’s mouthpiece and “channel of communication” to His people on earth. Endeavoring to validate their teaching that the majority of Christianity apostatized, the Watchtower Society seeks to find support for their doctrines in the teachings of the Ante-Nicene Church Fathers.¹ By claiming that these Fathers taught Watchtower doctrine, the Society maintains that although historic Christianity possessed pure doctrine at the time of the apostles, within four centuries, Christianity adopted “pagan” doctrines such as the doctrine of the Trinity. They then conclude, “Thus, the testimony of the Bible and of history makes clear that the **Trinity was unknown** throughout Biblical times and for **several centuries** thereafter.”² Are these claims credible? Note the following Scriptural passages which clearly articulate God’s preservation of the Church throughout history:

“...I *write* so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is **the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.**”—1 Timothy 3:15

“...upon this rock **I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.**”
—Matthew 16:18

“to Him *be* the **glory in the church** and in Christ Jesus to **all generations forever and ever.** Amen.”—Ephesians 3:21

“...I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the **faith** which was **once for all** delivered to the saints.”—Jude 3

¹ i.e., the Church Fathers who lived prior to the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D.

² *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 7

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With this assurance of protection, how could the Church have apostatized to the point of becoming pagan and needing to be restored? How could the Church which is “the pillar and support of truth” have crumbled, when Jesus promised that the gates of Hades would “not overpower it”? If the church truly apostatized, how could it have given glory to God throughout “all generations”? Due to the fact that it was in response to heresy that many doctrines of Christianity were formulated into creeds, the doctrine of the Trinity was not officially formulated until the fourth century. However, this does not in the least imply that this doctrine was not understood or taught prior to this time. Contrary to the Watchtower Society’s claims, the Ante-Nicene Fathers **did** uphold Trinitarian doctrine as is clearly revealed in their writings.

IGNATIUS (30-107 A.D.):

Although the Society’s brochure on the Trinity does not reference Ignatius, he studied under the Apostle John and was acquainted with other apostles who had seen Jesus. As a martyr who was executed for his faith Christ, Ignatius was a fervent follower of Jesus Christ and wrote four epistles to the Ephesians just prior to his execution at Rome on December 20th, A.D. 107. Therefore, Ignatius’ testimony on this issue is worth investigation:

“Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Church which is at Ephesus, in Asia...predestinated before the beginning of time...and elected through the true passion by the will of the Father, and **Jesus Christ, our God**....Being the followers of God, and stirring up yourselves **by the blood of God**, ye have perfectly accomplished the work which was befitting to you....**There is one Physician who is possessed both of flesh and spirit; both made and not made; God existing in flesh; true life in death; both of Mary and of God; first possible and then impossible, — even Jesus Christ our Lord.**”

—*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, pp. 49, 52³

These statements by Ignatius provide ample evidence that the concept of the Deity of Christ was well-known and accepted by the apostles and the early Church, and therefore cannot be of pagan origin. We will now turn our attention to the other Ante-Nicene Fathers that the Watchtower Society references in their brochure.

JUSTIN MARTYR (165 A.D.):

The Watchtower’s brochure states that Justin Martyr “called the prehuman Jesus a created angel who is ‘other than the God who made all things.’”⁴ However, far from teaching that Jesus is “a created angel,” Justin Martyr actually taught that Christ is “the Angel of God” who conversed with Moses out of the burning bush and revealed Himself as the Jehovah God saying, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob....I AM WHO I AM.”⁵ Justin

³ *The Ante-Nicene Fathers—Translation of The Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, edited by Rev. Alexander Roberts, D.D., and James Donaldson, LL.D. (WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI)

⁴ *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 7

⁵ Exodus 3:6, 14

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Martyr also understood the Scriptural term “first-begotten” of God to mean that Christ is of the same nature as God the Father. Note the following excerpts taken from his writings:

“For at that juncture, when Moses was ordered to go down into Egypt...our Christ conversed with him under the appearance of fire from a bush...‘And the Angel of God spake to Moses, in a flame of fire out of the bush, and said, I am that I am, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of thy fathers....’...the Father of the universe has a Son; **who also, being the first-begotten Word of God, is even God.** And of old He appeared in the shape of fire and in the likeness of an angel to Moses and to the other prophets...**in order to prove that Christ is called both God and Lord of hosts...**Moreover, in the diapsalm of the forty-sixth Psalm, reference is thus made to Christ: ‘God went up with a shout...’ And Trypho said, ‘...For you utter many blasphemies, in that **you seek to persuade us that this crucified man was with Moses and Aaron, and spoke to them in the pillar of the cloud...and ought to be worshipped.**’...And Trypho said, ‘We have heard what you think of these matters...For when you say that this **Christ existed as God before the ages...**this [assertion] appears to me to be not merely paradoxical, but also foolish.’ ”—*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, pp. 184, 212, 213, 219

IRENÆUS (200 A.D.):

The Society claims that Irenaeus “said that the prehuman Jesus had a separate existence from God and was inferior to him. He showed that Jesus is not equal to the ‘One true and only God,’ who is ‘supreme over all, and besides whom there is no other.’ ”⁶ This assertion on the part of the Watchtower Society is deceitful because Irenaeus did not contrast Christ with the “One true and only God” but actually contrasted the true God with the lesser gods of Gnosticism. In reality, Irenaeus taught the following concerning Christ:

“Very properly, then, did he say, ‘In the beginning was the Word,’ for He was in the Son; ‘and the Word was with God,’ for He was the beginning; **‘and the Word was God,’ of course, for that which is begotten of God is God.**”—*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, p. 328

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA (215 A.D.):

The Society’s booklet declares that Clement “called Jesus in his prehuman existence ‘a creature’....He said that the Son ‘is next to the only omnipotent Father’ **but not equal to him.**”⁷ This assertion is not only erroneous but is quite deceitful, for Clement actually taught the opposite of what the Society insinuates. Note the following excerpts taken from Clement’s writings which not only reveal the deception of the Society claims, but also the fact that as far back as the second century, the early Church Fathers articulated and defended the concept of the Trinity:

⁶ *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 7

⁷ *Ibid.*

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“...the Divine Word, **He that is truly most manifest Deity, He that is made equal to the Lord of the universe**; because He was His Son, and the Word was in God...**I understand nothing else than the Holy Trinity to be meant**; for the third is the Holy Spirit, and the Son is the second, by whom all things were made according to the will of the Father...There was, then, a Word importing an **unbeginning eternity**; as also the Word itself, that is, the Son of God, who being, by **equality of substance, one with the Father**, is eternal and **uncreate**.”—*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 2, pp. 202, 468, 574

TERTULLIAN (230 A.D.):

The Trinity brochure states that Tertullian “taught the supremacy of God. He observed: ‘The Father is different from the Son (another), as he is greater; as he who begets is different from him who is begotten; he who sends, different from him who is sent.’ He also said: ‘There was a time when the Son was not....Before all things, God was alone.’ ”⁸ Concerning this last statement, “there was a time when the Son was not,” Robert Bowman comments:

“Actually. the expression ‘there was a time when the Son was not’ **was not used by Tertullian himself**. Rather, this was an expression used by a modern scholar to summarize a statement made by Tertullian, who argued that God was always God, but not always Father of the Son: ‘For He could not have been the Father previous to the Son, nor a judge previous to sin.’ Since elsewhere Tertullian makes clear that he regard the *person* of the Son as eternal, in this statement Tertullian is probably asserting that the title of ‘Son’ did not apply to the second person of the Trinity until he began to relate to the ‘Father’ as a ‘Son’ in the work of creation.”—*Why You Should Believe in the Trinity*, 1989, p. 31

In his writings, Tertullian was very explicit in his articulation of the doctrine of the Trinity:

“He is the Son of God, **and is called God from unity of substance with God....so, too, that which has come forth out of God is at once God and the Son of God, and the two are one**. In this way also, as He is Spirit of Spirit and God of God, He is made a second in manner of existence—in **position, not in nature....and made flesh in her womb, is in His birth God and man united....Thus does He make Him equal to Him....I testify that the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit are inseparable from each other....they contend for the identity of the Father and Son and Spirit, that it is not by way of diversity that the Son differs from the Father, but by distribution: it is not by division that He is different, but by distinction**; because the Father is not the same as the Son, since they differ one from the other in the mode of their being....**when all the Scriptures attest the clear existence of, and distinction in, (the Persons of) the Trinity....In what sense, however, you ought to understand Him to be another, I have already explained, on the ground of Personality, not of Substance—in the way of distinction, not of division**. But although I must everywhere hold **one only substance**

⁸ *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 7

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in three coherent and inseparable (Persons)...”—*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, pp. 34-35, 601, 603, 606-607

HIPPOLYTUS (235 A.D.):

The Society claims that Hippolytus “said that God is ‘the one God, the first and the only One, the Maker and Lord of all,’ who ‘had nothing co-equal [of equal age] with him...But he was One, alone by himself; who willing it, called into being what had no being before,’ such as the created prehuman Jesus.”⁹ Here again, when one examines what Hippolytus actually taught, one uncovers another example where the Society misrepresents the facts. Note the following statements found in Hippolytus’ writings:

“God, subsisting alone, and having nothing contemporaneous with Himself, determined to create the world....Beside Him there was nothing; **but He, while existing alone, yet existed in plurality**....And thus there appeared another beside Himself. **But when I say another, I do not mean that there are two Gods**....Thus, then, these too, though they wish it not, fall in with the truth, and admit that **one God made all things...For Christ is the God above all**....He who is over all **is God**; for thus He speaks boldly, ‘All things are delivered unto me of my Father.’ He who is over all, God blessed, has been born; and having been made man, He is (yet) **God for ever**....**And well has he named Christ the Almighty.**”—*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 5, pp. 227, 153, 225

ORIGEN (250 A.D.):

The Society states that Origen taught “‘the Father and Son are two substances...two things as to their essence,’ and that ‘compared with the Father, [the Son] is a very small light.’”¹⁰ While it is true that Origen was not orthodox on all his teachings about the Trinity and was eventually regarded by the Church as a heretic (although this was not on the basis of his view of the Trinity), he did teach certain aspects of the Trinity.

“This is most clearly pointed out by the Apostle Paul, when demonstrating that the **power of the Trinity** is one and the same....From which it most clearly follows that **there is no difference in the Trinity**, but that which is called the gift of the Spirit is made known through the Son, and operated by God the Father....Having made these declarations regarding **the Unity of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit**....And who else is able to save and conduct the soul of man to the God of all things, save **God the Word...inasmuch as He was the Word**, and was with God, **and was God?**”—*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, pp. 255, 604

Concerning Origen’s orthodox and unorthodox views of the Trinity, Robert Bowman comments:

⁹ *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 7

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

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“...Origen was unorthodox in other aspects of his teaching on the Trinity. He tended to view the three persons more or less as three Gods, though without ever putting it just so, and (inconsistently) held that the Son and Spirit, though far superior beings to any creatures, were inferior to the Father. He thus also denied that worship or prayer should be addressed to the Son or the Spirit. **In sum, Origen’s view of God had similarities both to orthodox trinitarianism and to the JW’s doctrine of God.** Unlike the Witnesses, Origen believed that the Son was eternal and uncreated, and he definitely regarded the Spirit as a person. But, like the Witnesses, he regarded the Son as a second, inferior God next to Almighty God.”—*Why You Should Believe in the Trinity*, 1989, p. 34

THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

“AT THIS point you might ask: ‘If the Trinity is not a Biblical teaching, how did it become a doctrine of Christendom?’ Many think that it was formulated at the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. That is not totally correct, however. The Council of Nicaea did assert that Christ was of the same substance as God, which laid the groundwork for later Trinitarian theology. **But it did not establish the Trinity, for at that council there was no mention of the holy spirit as the third person of a triune Godhead.**”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 7

Amid the fires of debate generated on account of the heresy of Arius spreading within Constantine’s empire, on June 19, 325 A.D., the Council of Nicaea began with Eusebius of Caesarea the “first church historian” recording the events. The issue of debate focused on the person of Christ and His relationship to God the Father. Around 318 A.D., Arius began teaching that Jesus is a created being who is of a different substance (Greek: *heteroousios*) than the Father. Prior to this, as already noted in the discussion on the Ante-Nicene Fathers, Christians held to the view that God is a Trinity who consists of three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Arius’ heresy struck at the very heart of this doctrine; for by insisting that Jesus had to be created, he was teaching that Jesus is not the one true God, but is rather an inferior god who is in some sense only “divine.”

THREE VIEWS OF CHRIST DISCUSSED AT THE COUNCIL

DOCTRINE	LEADERS	VIEW OF CHRIST
Arianism	Arius	Different substance as the Father— <i>heteroousios</i>
Orthodox	Alexander, bishop of Alexandria; Hosius, bishop of Cordova; Athanasius, who eventually became bishop of Alexandria	Same substance as the Father— <i>homoousios</i>
Eusebian	Eusebius of Caesarea	Similar substance as the Father— <i>homoiousios</i>

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Fearing that the term *homoousios* could be misunderstood to advocate the heresy of modalism (promoted in earlier centuries by Sabellius and others who taught that Jesus and the Father are the same person), Eusebius and his proponents favored the term *homoiousios* feeling that this would avoid the heresy of Sabellius and at the same time refute Arianism. As the Council proceeded, each group shared its views, seeking to come to an agreement on what Scripture teaches and how to best communicate this truth. As the Orthodox group expressed their position that by using the term *homoousios*, they were not compromising the teaching of the distinctions in the persons of the Trinity, but were rather endeavoring to defend the Deity of the persons, the Council eventually came to an agreement with all but Arius and two bishops signing the following creed:

“We believe...in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, **of one substance (*homoousios*) with the Father**, through Whom all things were made....”¹¹

The Watchtower Society argues that the doctrine of the Trinity was not totally formulated at the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D., because there was no mention of the Holy Spirit at this council. While it is true that the person of the Holy Spirit was not discussed at this time, the council did affirm Trinitarian doctrine not only by the fact that it acknowledged that Christ is of the same substance as the Father, but the Nicene Creed¹² states: “I believe in one God, the **Father Almighty**, Maker of heaven and earth...And in one Lord **Jesus Christ**...And I believe in the **Holy Ghost**, the Lord and Giver of Life....”¹³ The reason the person of the Holy Spirit was not discussed at the Nicene Council is due to the fact that the issue of controversy concerned the Son—not the Holy Spirit.

“CONSTANTINE’S ROLE AT NICAEA”

“Constantine was not a Christian. Supposedly, he converted later in life, but **he was not baptized until he lay dying**. Regarding him, Henry Chadwick says in *The Early Church*: ‘Constantine, like his father, worshipped the Unconquered Sun;...his conversion should not be interpreted as an inward experience of grace...It was a military matter.’ ”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 8

The Society’s Trinity brochure twists the quotes from Chadwick’s book *The Early Church* in order to give the impression that he was teaching that Constantine was not a Christian. Note the context from which these quotes are derived:

¹¹ Quoted in “*What Really Happened At Nicea?*” by James R. White, *Christian Research Journal*, July-Aug 1997, pp. 28-34

¹² Although the Nicene Creed was formulated at the Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D., it was named after the Council of Nicaea due to the groundwork laid at this council for the formulation of this creed.

¹³ Quoted in *Christianity In Crisis*, by Hank Hanegraaf, 1993, (Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR), p. 375

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“Constantine, like his father, worshipped the Unconquered Sun; [page 122] ...The conversion of Constantine marks a turning-point in the history of the Church and of Europe. [page 125] ...**But if his conversion should not be interpreted as an inward experience of grace**, neither was it a cynical act of Machiavellian cunning. It was a military matter. His comprehension of Christian doctrine was never very clear, but he was sure that victory in battle lay in the gift of the God of the Christians...He was not baptized until he lay dying in 337, **but this implies no doubt about his Christian belief. It was common at this time** (and continued so until about A.D. 400) **to postpone baptism to the end of one’s life**, especially if one’s duty as an official included torture and execution of criminals. Part of the reason for postponement lay in the seriousness with which the responsibilities of baptism were taken. Constantine favoured Christianity among the many religions of his subjects, but did not make it the official or ‘established’ religion of the empire.”—*The Early Church*, pp. 122, 125, 127

It appears that Constantine “worshipped the Unconquered Sun” prior to his conversion.¹⁴ Also, in context, it seems like Chadwick felt that Constantine’s conversion was genuine. However, he admits that “if” Constantine’s conversion was not genuine, it should be interpreted as “a military matter.” Nevertheless, the fact that Constantine was not baptized until the end of his life “implies no doubt about his Christian belief. It was common...to postpone baptism to the end of one’s life.” While it is true that Constantine was the one who officially called the Nicene Council, he did not force his views upon the Council. This can be seen by his willingness (in subsequent years) to abandon the Nicene position in order to enhance his political position. He was not a theologian, but was primarily interested in unity, for he recognized how disunity on these issues threatened his empire.

Although the Council of Nicaea rejected Arianism, this was by no means the end of controversy. For nearly five decades from 332-381, Arianism seemed to reign. Emperors generally preferred Arianism (which taught that Jesus was a “divine” creature) as the more attractive religious system due to the fact that it advocated that a creature could be a god, and they felt it was easier to rule if their subjects thought of them as being somewhat “divine.”

Constantine’s successor, his second son Constantius, ruled the East and allowed Arianism to flourish under his rulership. Eusebius of Nicomedia, Arians and semi-Arians endeavored to overturn Nicaea. Under Constantius, regional councils met at Ariminum, Seleucia, and Sirmium, forcing many leaders to subscribe to Arian and semi-Arian creeds. **Athanasius who became bishop of Alexandria shortly after the Council of Nicaea was removed from his position five times, and even Hosius who was now nearly 100 years old, was threatened.** Despite pressure to compromise, Athanasius continued to fight, and remained firm in his conviction that Scripture should be regarded as the supreme authority; thus, giving rise to the phrase, “*Athanasius contra mundum*—Athanasius against the world.” Although Athanasius did not write the Athanasian creed, it was named after him due to his perseverance and uncompromised stance on the issue of the Deity of Christ.

¹⁴ Note page 122 in Chadwick’s book appears before his conversion on page 125.

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Finally at the Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D., the Trinity was reaffirmed, and (contrary to the claims of the Watchtower’s Trinity brochure), from this point on throughout history, it has been widely accepted. Soon after this council, Arianism died out with internal fighting among its advocates, and throughout subsequent years, the doctrine of the Trinity continued to be clarified as it was codified in creeds.¹⁵ As *The Encyclopedia Americana* notes: “The **full development** of Trinitarianism took place in the West, in the Scholasticism of the Middle Ages, when an explanation was undertaken in terms of philosophy and psychology....”¹⁶

Apostasy Foretold

“THIS disreputable history of the Trinity fits in with what Jesus and his apostles foretold would follow their time....Accurate knowledge of God brings great relief. It frees us from teachings that are in conflict with God’s Word and from **organizations that have apostatized**....By honoring God as supreme and worshiping him on his terms, we can avoid the judgment that he will soon bring on **apostate Christendom**.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 9, 31

As foretold in the Scriptures, throughout history as well as in our day, there are groups of people who were at one time considered within the perimeters of Biblical Christianity but have subsequently turned away from the truths found in God’s Word and have followed after heretical teachers who teach what these people want to hear.¹⁷ Nevertheless, simply because **some** of the people of Christianity have turned away into heresy, this does not imply that Christianity as a whole has become apostate. As was noted previously, Jesus and his apostles foretold that the Church would endure and give glory to God “throughout all ages.” Thus, one must conclude that Christianity could not have become apostate as the Watchtower booklet asserts. Notice that at 1 Timothy 4:1 where Paul speaks of an apostasy that is to come in the last days, he states that “some,” not all, will fall away.

¹⁵ For more information on the Council of Nicaea, see the July-August 1997 issue of the *Christian Research Journal* article entitled “*What Really Happened At Nicea?*” by James R. White. A transcript of this article may be obtained by writing to the Christian Research Institute at: P.O. Box 7000, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688.

¹⁶ *The Encyclopedia Americana*, vol. 27, p. 117

¹⁷ See 2 Timothy 4:3-4

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At this point, the Watchtower booklet endeavors to validate their claims concerning the Trinity by trying to establish a link between the doctrine of the Trinity found in Christianity and the pagan gods of past centuries. On page 10 of the Trinity brochure, endeavoring to convey the idea that the doctrine of the Trinity is of pagan origin, the Society pictures sculptures of **Egyptian, Babylonian, and Hindu** false gods of past centuries along with pictures of Trinitarian figures in more recent centuries. However, the Society totally overlooks one of the major difference between pagan false gods and Trinitarian doctrine.

Far from the teachings of Christian monotheists who hold to the concept that the Triune God is three persons yet one God, pagans were polytheists who believed in many gods. One prime example of this can be found in the Watchtower’s illustration of the so-called Egyptian “Triad of Horus, Osiris, Isis.” The Society fails to mention, however, that this so-called “triad” was actually comprised of a family of several gods (not just three), led by a head god named “Amon Ra.” This god family consisted of Seb (father) and Nut (mother) whose god children were Set, Nedphthys, Isis, and Osiris. Osiris then married his sister, Isis, and begot Horus, Seth, and (in some pagan cults) a third child named Anpu.¹ Therefore, simply because one may find pagan sculptures which represent three of their many false gods together in one statue, this does not in the least imply that they believed in some sort of a Trinity. In reality, the Christian monotheistic concept of the one and only Triune God is diametrically opposed to the pagan legends involving a triad of gods who ruled over many other gods. Concerning these pagan sculptures pictured in the Society’s brochure, Robert Bowman observes:

“Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Hindu, and Buddhist triads, as well as Platonism, are all claimed as influencing the development of the Trinity. But it is absurd to claim that all of these significantly influenced the trinitarians. Third, **most of these alleged ‘influences’ where either far too early of far too late, or far too removed geographically, to have any significant influence.** Artwork picturing Egyptian and Babylonian triads are reproduced, despite the fact that the art dated from about two thousand years before the Witnesses claim the Trinity originated! Other artwork depicting Hindu and Buddhist triads from the seventh and twelfth centuries are shown, despite the fact that these were done centuries after the Trinity had become the official religion of the Roman Empire! Fourth, the JW booklet points out that Athanasius was a bishop in Alexandria, Egypt, and from this fact argues that his trinitarianism reflected the influence of Egyptian triads (p.11). But this geographical coincidence is no more significant than the fact that **Athanasius’s archival, Arius, was also from Alexandria!**”—*Why You Should Believe in the Trinity*, 1989, p. 43

As discussed earlier, when the term “person” is used in reference to the Trinity, it is employed to designate the **relationship** between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—not as separate Gods or as separate people as the term “person” might be misunderstood to imply—but rather, that each “person” of the Triune God has the **attributes** of personality (i.e., mind, will, and emotions). These illustrations of the Trinity pictured in the Watchtower’s booklet present a misconception of the doctrine of the Trinity,

¹ See *Exposing Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, by Angel Arellano, Jr., p. 22

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for they fail to take into account that while the three persons are each distinct from one another in their personalities, they are not identical to each other. One doesn’t have to possess a body of flesh and bones in order to be regarded as a person. Just as we consider angels, Satan, and his demons persons even though they do not have bodies of flesh and bones, this same principle can be applied to the persons of the Triune God. The only exception to this principle is Jesus because He possesses a human nature in addition to His Divine nature and is therefore considered the God-man.² Endeavoring to present scholarly support for their claims, the Society once again quotes a number of sources. The following is an examination of these sources:

THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION: Part III, Caesar and Christ, by Will Durant:

The Society quotes Will Durant as stating that “Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it.” However, Durant is not a reputable source to consult, for he makes several assertions regarding Christianity which neither the Society nor Biblical Christians would accept. Note the following:

“It seems incredible that the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel should have come from the same hand. The Apocalypse is Jewish poetry, **the Fourth Gospel is Greek philosophy**....Just as Philo, learned in Greek speculation, had felt a need to rephrase Judaism in forms acceptable to the logic-loving Greeks, **so John...sought to give a Greek philosophical tinge** to the mystic Jewish doctrine that the Wisdom of God was a living being, and to the Christian doctrine that Jesus was the Messiah. Consciously or not, he continued **Paul’s work** of detaching Christianity from Judaism....Now the pagan world—even the anti-Semitic world—could accept him as its own. Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it.”—*The Story of Civilization: Part III, Caesar and Christ*, 1944, pp. 594-595

EGYPTIAN RELIGION, by Siegfried Morenz:

Siegfried Morenz is another author who the Watchtower Society quotes, but neither the Society nor Biblical Christians would agree with many of the following claims Morenz makes concerning Christianity:

“***Creation through God’s word*** A third mode of creation, again completely different from the foregoing ones, is through the word of the creator. This, too, was turned into a **classical doctrine in Egypt**, which centred not on Atum of Heliopolis, as the previously mentioned one did, but on Ptah of Memphis....Keeping to such rigorous interpretation of the evidence, we may go on to recall **the doctrine of creation through the word, which as we know (see pp. 163-6) was one of the principal elements in the Egyptian cosmogony**....Less important, but more readily comprehensible, **is the influence of the Egyptian court chronicle upon the literary form of the Israelites’ chronicle account of David and Solomon**....It is also found in the familiar parallels between Egyptian and Israelite **wisdom literature**, which in general may be regarded as a gift of Egypt....Other passages can, however, be claimed as Egyptian in inspiration: for instance, **the Egyptian**

² See John 2:18-22; Luke 24:37-39; Romans 8:11; Colossians 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5; Matthew 26:64; Acts 17:31

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(and Mesopotamian) lists of knowledge, which were the basis of the proverbs which King Solomon spoke....In one of the few cases where a concept that figures in the New Testament has been taken to be ultimately of Egyptian origin, Jesus’s parable of Dives and Lazarus....and how large a part was played by Greek elements (Stoic diatribes), emerged some years ago from an analysis of the association between ship and tongue in the Epistle of St James, which was originally Egyptian....two passages in the Epistle to the Romans: the proverbial ‘coals of fire’...derived from a Late Egyptian penitential rite - and, much more significantly, the Apostle’s words on the absolute power of the Creator to confer honour and dishonour....It is also present in the notion of a ‘crown of life’, or in those of righteousness and glory; in elucidating these concepts one must draw not only upon Greek material but also upon the ‘crown of righteousness’ to which there were so many references during the last centuries of Egyptian paganism.”—*Egyptian Religion*, pp. 163, 251-252, 254-255

In spite of these parallels between pagan philosophy and Christian doctrine Siegfried endeavors to draw, he nevertheless states:

“In order to avoid any gross misunderstanding, we must at once emphasize that the substance of the Christian Trinity is of course Biblical: Father, Son and Holy Ghost....All this entitles us to the opinion that Egypt played its part in the efforts of Christians to achieve an understanding of God and his works, which are eternal.”—*Egyptian Religion*, pp. 255, 257

THE PAGANISM IN OUR CHRISTIANITY, by Arthur Weigall:

On pages 3, 6, and 11 of the Society’s brochure, they quote from Arthur Weigall’s book *The Paganism in Our Christianity* in support of their assertion that the concept of the Trinity is “entirely pagan.” Is Weigall a credible source? Note the following statements Weigall makes concerning the accuracy of the New Testament, the virgin birth, and the death and resurrection of Christ:

“No Biblical scholar of any standing to-day, whether he be a clergyman, a minister, or a layman, accepts the entire New Testament as authentic; and all admit that many errors, misunderstandings, and absurdities have crept into the story of Christ’s life and other matters....In regard to the Virgin Birth....It seems clear, therefore, that the story was not known, or at any rate was not accepted, before A.D. 100, that is to say, a whole century after the date of the event it records....if Joseph was not then thought to be the father of Jesus it is difficult to understand why the pedigree was given at all....The growth of such a story may well be understood, for tales of the births of pagan gods....He had not been much hurt by being crucified....no faith would be worth consideration which based itself merely on the apparent coming to life of a dead body....in the end His mortal body must have died and returned to dust.”—*The Paganism in Our Christianity*, 1928, pp. 30-31, 42-43, 44, 94-95

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As a liberal scholar who denies so many doctrines of Biblical Christianity, it is clearly evident that Weigall is not a scholar one should consult in matters pertaining to essential doctrines of the historic Christian faith.

ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS, by James Hastings:

While it is true that James Hastings does state that the concept of the Trinity can be found in pagan religions, he nevertheless goes on to remark that: “Truly, if the doctrine of the Trinity appeared somewhat late in theology, it must have **lived very early in devotion.**”—*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 12, pp. 458-459

THE NEW SCHAFF-HERZOG ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE:

Although this encyclopedia also endeavors to draw a parallel between the pagan doctrines of Plato and the teachings of Christianity, it goes on to declare that the early church fathers prior to Nicaea such as “Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen....”³ were also influenced by Platonic philosophy.

THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES, by Alvan Lamson:

Throughout their brochure, the Society quotes Lamson’s book endeavoring to provide support for their assertion that the doctrine of the Trinity “had its origin in a source entirely foreign from that of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures;...it grew up, and was ingrafted on Christianity, through the hands of the Platonizing Fathers.”⁴ A look at the title page of this book reveals that its publisher is the “British and Foreign Unitarian Association.” Concerning Unitarianism, various encyclopedias have this to say:

“Unitarianism is a religious view that was organized in institutional form in Poland, Transylvania, England, and the United States....The separate movements had common characteristics” among these being their **“rejections of the doctrines of the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, and human corruption or total depravity....The British and Foreign Unitarian Association, founded in 1825, was aided by the repeal of laws against nonconformity....”**⁵ William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), who was the “most prominent supporter of the Unitarians during this period” and whose “sermon ‘Unitarian Christianity’ (1819) was widely accepted as a good statement of their position”⁶ “replied that...**most of the liberal ministers were Arians....**”⁷

“Unitarianism...denies the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity....Theological foundations...are found in 2nd- and 3rd-century monarchianism and in the teachings of Arius....The **modern roots of Unitarianism** are traced to the 16th-century Protestant Reformation, when **certain liberal, radical, and rationalist**

³ *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 9, p. 91

⁴ *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 11

⁵ *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 1987, vol. 15, pp. 143-144

⁶ *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1994, vol. 20, p. 42

⁷ *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 1987, vol. 15, p. 144

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reformers revived the Platonic emphasis on reason and the unity of God.”—*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1768, 1998 (15th ed.), vol. 12, p. 137

“Unitarian Universalist believe an individual should be **free to form his own religious beliefs**. They hold an optimistic view of the nature of man....⁸ “Unitarian ministers soon began to argue that **religious truth should be based on universal religious experiences, rather than on the record of historical events**. In addition, these ministers believed that religious truth and inspiration could be found in traditions **other** than Christianity.”⁹

In view of the liberal, biased nature of Unitarianism against the doctrine of the Trinity, is it any wonder that such an organization would be behind a book which promotes an alleged “late origin and gradual formation” of the doctrine of the Trinity?

OUTLINES OF THE HISTORY OF DOGMA, by Adolf Harnack:

The Society cites Adolf Harnack as another authority in support of their claims. However, the Society fails to mention that Harnack was a strong **liberal** whose appointment as professor at Berlin from 1889-1921 “**was challenged by the church because of Harnack’s doubts about the authorship of the fourth gospel and other NT books**, his unorthodox interpretations of biblical miracles including the Resurrection and his denial of Christ’s institution of baptism (see his *History of Dogma*, 7 vols., 1894-99).”—*New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 1978, p. 452

A STATEMENT OF REASONS, by Andrews Norton:

Another disreputable source the Society references is this book by Andrew Norton. The full title of his book is as follows: “*A Statement of Reasons for Not Believing The Doctrine of Trinitarians Concerning the Nature of God and the Person of Christ*,” published by the “**Boston American Unitarian Association**, 1880.” Andrew Norton was a Unitarian! Is it any wonder he wrote a book against Trinity doctrine?

Not only do the sources referenced in the Society’s brochure endeavor to draw parallels between pagan doctrine and Christian doctrine, but many of these sources are **attacking the Bible** as being the **cause** of the alleged paganism in Christianity! Since many of these liberal authors are actually attacking the Bible as being pagan in origin, one wonders how credible the Society’s claim of the alleged pagan infiltration into Christian doctrine truly is. As every honest Jehovah’s Witness would admit, it is one thing to assert that Christianity adopted paganism, **it is quite another thing to say the Bible adopted paganism**.

Simply because similarities between pagan gods and the Christian concept of the Trinity may be found, this is not a valid reason to conclude that the concept of the Trinity is of pagan origin. For example, in pagan legends, it was taught that a messiah-like creature named “Tammuz” was resurrected, and many pagan legends hold to the view that a flood occurred sometime in the history of mankind. Would it be

⁸ *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1968, vol. 19, p. 20

⁹ *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1994, vol. 20, pp. 42-43

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legitimate to argue that the biblical teachings concerning Jesus Christ's resurrection and Noah's flood are of pagan origin simply because pagans taught similar accounts long ago? On the contrary (as the following illustration will demonstrate) the very fact that pagans legends hold to these concepts actually lends **credence** to the **validity** of these doctrines.

Take, for example, the existence of counterfeit money. Since no real U.S. **three dollar bill** exists, one will search in vain to find a counterfeit three dollar bill, for it would easily be recognized. Because the purpose of the counterfeit is to deceive people into accepting the counterfeit in place of the real thing, counterfeit bills are only designed to resemble real dollar bills. Just as this occurs in the physical realm, Satan employs this deception in the spiritual realm in order to deceive people into accepting counterfeit doctrine. **Thus, the very fact that similarities between the Biblical doctrine of Noah's flood, the Resurrection, and the Trinity may be found in pagan cultures, actually aids in substantiating these doctrines.**

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“THE Bible teaching that God is one is called **monotheism**. And **L.L. Paine**, professor of ecclesiastical history, indicates that monotheism in its purest form does not allow for a Trinity....‘Here, O Israel, the Lord our God is **one** God.’ Those words are found at **Deuteronomy 6:4**....In the grammar of that verse, the word ‘one’ has no plural modifiers to suggest that it means anything but one individual....Thousands of times throughout the Bible, God is spoken of as one person. **When he speaks, it is as one undivided individual**. The Bible could not be any clearer on this....**Surely, if God were composed of three persons, he would have had his Bible writers make it abundantly clear so that there could be no doubt about it.**”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 12-13

The Watchtower quotes Levi Leonard Paine in support of their claims that monotheism rules out trinitarianism, but just like other authors the Society has quoted, Paine is a liberal scholar who does **not** believe the Bible is “of a divine miraculous origin and character, differentiating the Bible from all other religious literature....”¹ Therefore, one must conclude that he is not a reputable source that one should consult for information. After quoting Paine, the Society quotes Deuteronomy 6:4, stating that the word “one” should not be interpreted to mean “anything but one individual.” While Deuteronomy 6:4, known as the Hebrew *Shema*, is a clear declaration from God stating that He **alone** is God, the Hebrew word *echod* translated “one” in this passage can refer to plurality within unity. Notice how *echod* is employed in the following passages:

- **GENESIS 2:24**: “...and they shall become **one** flesh.”
- **GENESIS 29:20**: “...served seven years...they seemed to him but a **few** days....”
- **1 CHRONICLES 12:38**: “...all the rest also of Israel where of **one** mind....”²

The Society argues that since God is often spoken of in singular terms, such as “He,” “Him,” “I,” and “Myself,” He cannot be a Trinity. While Trinitarians agree that God speaks of Himself in singular terms, this does not contradict the fact that He is a composite being of three persons. Even in the Old Testament, shadows of the Trinity can be seen as is demonstrated by the following verses:

- **GENESIS 1:26-27**: “...‘Let Us make man in **Our image**, according to **Our likeness**;’...And God created man in **His own image**....”³
- **ISAIAH 48:16b**: “And now the **Lord God** has sent **Me**, and **His Spirit**.”⁴
- **2 SAMUEL 23:2-3**: “The **Spirit of the LORD** spoke....The **God of Israel** said...The **Rock of Israel** spoke....”⁵

¹ See page 269 of Levi Leonard Paine’s book, *A Critical History of The Evolution of Trinitarianism*, 1900, (Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, Boston and New York; The Riverside Press, Cambridge)

² Note in the *King James Version* and the Watchtower’s *New World Translation* “one mind” is rendered as “one heart.”

³ Here we see that the “our image” was the image of God Himself! (Genesis 5:1) Other Old Testament passages that could be cited as cases where God speaks in the plural form are Genesis 3:22; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8.

⁴ The context of Isaiah 48:12-16 reveals that Jehovah God is the one who is speaking about sending Himself in the person of Christ.

⁵ Jesus is called the spiritual “rock” of Israel at 1 Corinthians 10:4.

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- **ZECHARIAH 2:8-11**: “For thus says the **LORD** of hosts, ‘...Then you will know that **the LORD of hosts has sent Me....behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,**’ declares the **LORD**. ‘...and will become **My people**. Then **I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.**’ ”
- **ZECHARIAH 12:10**: “...they will look **on Me** whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for **Him....**”

The Society makes the claim that “...if God were composed of three persons, he would have had his Bible writers make it abundantly clear so that there could be no doubt about it.” Let’s now take a moment and observe how “abundantly clear” God has revealed Himself in the Scriptures. The doctrine of the Trinity is based on three premises which are distinctly revealed in the Scriptures.

1. **THE THREE PERSONS OF THE TRINITY ARE SHOWN TO BE SEPARATE AND DISTINCT**: As noted earlier, by employing the term “person” to represent the uniqueness of the individuals of the Trinity, one must not perceive that we are implying that these persons each have bodies of flesh and bones.⁶ The term “person” is used to designate the **qualities** and **attributes** of personhood that they manifest as they relate to each other. For example, note how the Son prays to the Father (John 17), the Father sends the Son (John 3:16-17; Matthew 3:16-17), and the Father “knows” the “mind” of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:27), while the Holy Spirit “searches” the depths of God and “knows” the thoughts of God (1 Cor. 2:10-11).
2. **WHILE EACH OF THE THREE PERSONS POSSESS THE ATTRIBUTES OF DEITY THEY ARE EACH ADDRESSED AS “GOD”**: The following charts illustrate some of the passages from which the doctrine of the Trinity is derived. Take note of how each member of the Trinity has the attributes of Deity and each perform tasks that only God can do.⁷

<u>DIVINE QUALITY</u>	<u>THE FATHER</u>	<u>THE SON</u>	<u>THE HOLY SPIRIT</u>
OMNIPRESENCE	Jeremiah 23:24; 1 Kings 8:27	Matthew 28:20; 18:20; John 1:48	Psalms 139:7
OMNISCIENCE	Psalms 147:5; 1 John 3:20; 1 Kings 8:39	John 16:30; 2:24-25	1 Corinthians 2:10-11
OMNIPOTENCE	Jeremiah 32:17,27; Matthew 19:26; Luke 1:37; Psalm 135:6	Matthew 28:18; John 16:15; Hebrews 1:3	Romans 15:19
HOLINESS	Revelation 15:4	Acts 3:14	Romans 1:4
ETERNITY	Psalms 90:2;	Hebrews 7:3; Isaiah	Hebrews 9:14

⁶ God is spirit John 4:24.

⁷ Regarding the Deity of Christ, take note of Mark 2:7,10 and Luke 24:47

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“JESUS called God ‘the only true God.’ (John 17:3) Never did he refer to God as a deity of plural persons. **That is why nowhere in the Bible is anyone but Jehovah called Almighty. Otherwise, it voids the meaning of the word ‘almighty.’** Neither Jesus nor the holy spirit is ever called that, for Jehovah alone is supreme....In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word *’elol’ah* (god) has two plural forms....**These plural forms generally refer to Jehovah,** in which case they are translated in the singular as ‘God.’ Do these plural forms indicate a Trinity? No, they do not.... ‘It is either what grammarians call the plural of majesty, or it denotes the fullness of divine strength, the sum of the powers displayed by God.’ ” —*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 13

The phrase “only true God” in John 17:3 is not intended to contrast the Father and the Son, but rather, to contrast the one true God with that of false gods (Jeremiah 10:10-11; 1 John 5:20). The Society has a valid point when they claim that Jehovah is the only one who is called “Almighty.” This is one reason why Trinitarians believe that Jesus is Jehovah. At Revelation 1:8, the “Alpha and the Omega” is called “Almighty,” and when we compare this with Revelation 22:12-13, 20, we find that this “Alpha and Omega” is Jesus Christ. Since we know that Jehovah is Almighty and that there can only be one Almighty, it is obvious that Jesus is Jehovah God!

Concerning the Hebrew plural term *’elo-him* which is translated “God” in the Old Testament, it is true that various scholars feel that this term is used only to express God’s “fullness” of power rather than the persons of the Trinity. While this debate exists among recognized scholars, one should not accept or deny the Trinity solely on his personal interpretation of this term, because support for the doctrine of the Trinity is far more extensive than this.

ANSWERING WATCHTOWER PROOF TEXTS

In the section found on page 14 of the Watchtower brochure, the Society discusses three “proof-texts” they twist to deny the Deity of Christ (Colossians 1:15-16; Revelation 3:14; Proverbs 8:12, 22-23). We will now examine each of these:

COLOSSIANS 1:15-16:

“And He is the image of the invisible God, the **first-born** of all creation.
For **by** Him all things were created....”

The Society argues that the fact that the Bible calls Jesus “first-born” proves that Jesus had to be created. They then assert that because Scripture teaches that God created the universe “through” Jesus, he cannot be God, but merely the instrument that God used in creation.

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**3 REASONS WHY THE SOCIETY’S ARGUMENTS BASED
ON THIS VERSE ARE UNSOUND:**

1. “FIRST-BORN” MEANS SUPREMACY OF POSITION:

- **PSALM 89:27:** David, who was the last born son of Jesse,⁸ is called “first-born.”
- **JEREMIAH 31:9:** Ephraim, who was born after Manasseh,⁹ is called “first-born.”
- **EXODUS 4:22:** Israel is called God’s “first-born” son.
- **JOB 18:13:** An illness is called “the first-born of death.”

It was the Hebrew custom that the position of the “first-born” son held special privileges within the family. “He received the special family blessing, which meant spiritual and social leadership and a double portion of the father’s possessions—or twice what all the other sons received (Deut. 21:17). He could lose this blessing through misdeeds (Gen. 35:22) or by selling it (Gen. 25:29-34).”¹⁰ Context determines whether the term “first-born” in a particular passage should be interpreted as referring to supremacy of position as the preeminent one or the first one physically born. Since the whole context of Colossians chapter one is speaking about the **supremacy of Christ** as being the Creator rather than being of the creation,¹¹ it is in this sense that Christ is called the “firstborn” or preeminent one of creation. Indeed, “...He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have **first place in everything**. For it was the *Father’s* good pleasure for **all the fulness to dwell in Him...**” —Colossians 1:18-19

2. PAUL USED THE GREEK TERM *PROTOTOKOS* RATHER THAN *PROTOXTIOTI*:

If the Apostle Paul had intended to convey the concept that Jesus was the first creature created by Jehovah, he would have used the term *prototioti* (πρωτοχτιοτι) which means “first-created” rather than using the term *prototokos* (πρωτοτοκος) which means “firstborn” or “preeminent one.” According to Hebrews 7:3, Melchizedek, who was a picture of Christ, had “**neither beginning of days nor end of life...like the Son of God.**”¹² Indeed, our eternal High/Priest Mediator, Jesus

⁸ 1 Samuel 16:11

⁹ Genesis 41:51-52

¹⁰ *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, 1985, (Thomas Nelson Publishers), p. 83 (Hebrew portion of this one-volume edition)

¹¹ In order to make this passage compatible with their doctrine of Christ having been created, the Society inserts the word “other” four times into their translation of Colossians 1:16-17 found in their *New World Translation*, thus reading that “all [other] things” were created through Christ.” Nevertheless, at John 1:3 we read that Christ created “all things”—not all other things.

¹² Melchizedek king of Salem was a high priest of God to whom Abraham bestowed his tithes (Genesis 14:18-20). Melchizedek’s name means “Righteous King” Priest of Salem (Peace). Thus, he is one of the people in the Old Testament that God used to be a picture of Christ to the Israelites. Just like Jesus Christ as God has always existed, so Melchizedek was “without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life” in the sense that this information **was not recorded** in Scripture so that Melchizedek would better represent the eternal nature of Jesus Christ our High Priest/Mediator.

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Christ, has no “beginning of days,” for nothing that was created came into being “apart from Him.” (John 1:3)

3. “ALL THINGS” WERE CREATED “THROUGH” BOTH THE FATHER AND THE SON:

Because the universe is said to be created “through” Christ, the Society endeavors to argue that Jesus is not the Supreme Creator but only the instrument that Jehovah used to accomplish His act of Creation. While the Society makes an issue of the universe being created “through” (διὰ—*dia*) Jesus, they neglect the fact that at **Romans 11:36** and **Hebrews 2:10** all things are said to be created “through” the Father. Since it is untenable to argue that the Father is not the Supreme Creator because all things were created “through” Him, it is untenable to argue that Jesus is not the Supreme Creator simply because all things were created “through” Him.

ISAIAH 44:24b	JOHN 1:3
“ I, the LORD , am the maker of all things , stretching out the heavens by Myself, and spreading out the earth all alone ...” ¹³	“ All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.”

REVELATION 3:14:

“...the **Beginning** of the creation of God.”

The Society argues that the word “‘Beginning’ [Greek, *ar-khe*] **cannot rightly be interpreted to mean that Jesus was the ‘beginner’ of God’s creation.** In his Bible writings, John uses various forms of the Greek word *ar-khe* more than 20 times, and these always have the common meaning of ‘beginning.’ Yes, Jesus was created by God as the beginning of God’s invisible creations.” —*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 14

At **Revelation 21:6 and 22:13**, John quotes God Almighty as stating that He is “the beginning and the end.”¹⁴ Why is Jehovah God called the “beginning”? Is this passage teaching that Jehovah God had a “beginning”? Obviously, Not! So, what is He the “beginning” of? It is obvious that He is the “beginning” of the created universe. Thus, if Jehovah God is called the “beginning” of the created universe and He **is not** regarded as being **part of** what He began, why can’t Jesus be called the “beginning” of creation and He **is not** regarded as being **part of** the creation which He began?

If the Greek word “*arche*” is used in Scripture to indicate Almighty God’s power and authority as the originator and “beginner” of creation, is it plausible to argue that *arche* cannot be applied to Christ to

¹³ At this verse, the Society’s *New World Translation* states: “I, Jehovah, am doing everything, stretching out the heavens by myself, laying out the earth. **Who was with me?**”

¹⁴ At Revelation 1:8, Almighty God is revealed to be the “Alpha and the Omega.” At Revelation 21:6, the “Alpha and the Omega” states that He is the “beginning and the end.” Thus, it is Almighty God who is speaking here at Revelation 21:6 and 22:13.

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indicate His power and authority as the “beginner” of creation? Obviously, Not! Contrary to the Society’s claims, the Greek word *arche* (αρχη) is used to denote not only someone who is an originator, but also someone who is a ruler or magistrate. In fact, it is from this Greek word that our English words “architect” and “archbishop” are derived.¹⁵ Notice how *arche* is translated in the following passages found in the *King James Version* of the Bible:

- **LUKE 12:11:** “And when they bring you...unto **magistrates**, and powers...”
- **LUKE 20:20:** “...deliver him unto the **power** and authority of the governor.”
- **1 CORINTHIANS 15:24:** “...put down all **rule** and all authority and power.”
- **COLOSSIANS 2:10:** “...the head of all **principality** and power...”

As far as *arche* being used to signify the originator of something, notice how *archegos* (αρχηγος), a derivative of *arche*, is translated in the following passages found in the *New American Standard Bible*:

- **ACTS 3:15:** “but put to death the **Prince** of life...”
- **HEBREWS 2:10:** “...to perfect the **author** of their salvation through sufferings.”
- **HEBREWS 12:2:** “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the **author** and perfecter of faith...”

As is evident by the way *arche* is translated in these passages, the Watchtower Society’s assertion that *arche* cannot be applied to Christ as the “beginner” of God’s creation” is entirely without merit. At Revelation 3:14, Scripture is actually teaching that Jesus Christ is the Architect and Ruler of creation, for all creation **began** with Christ.

PROVERBS 8:12, 22-23:

“I, wisdom, **dwelt with prudence**....The LORD **possessed** me at the beginning of His way....**From everlasting I was established**....”

The Society’s *New World Translation* translates Proverbs 8:22 as “Jehovah himself **produced** me as the beginning of his way....” They use these verses in Proverbs 8 attempting to prove that Jesus was created and thus has not always existed. Although the Society admits that these verses in context are speaking of wisdom personified, they claim that this passage is “actually a figure of speech for Jesus as a spirit creature prior to his human existence.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 14

If the “wisdom” in Proverbs 8 is actually referring to Jesus, who is the “prudence”¹⁶ that Jesus (as wisdom) dwells with? If wisdom had to be created (was “produced”), **are we to conclude that God had no wisdom until a certain time when He created it?** It is obvious that God wouldn’t be God if there was a time when He was without wisdom. Therefore, we must recognize that wisdom is just as

¹⁵ See Ron Rhodes’ book *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah’s Witnesses*, 1993, (Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR) pp. 123-125

¹⁶ In the Society’s *New World Translation* the word is “shrewdness.”

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eternal as God is. In fact, the same Hebrew word translated “everlasting” or “time indefinite” (*owlam*) which is used to express God’s eternal nature at **Psalm 90:2** is used to express the eternal nature of wisdom at Proverbs 8:23. The *New American Translation* better translates these passages as it states that God “possessed” wisdom, rather than “produced” wisdom. These passages reveal how God brought forth wisdom to take part in His creation.

PROVERBS 8:22-23	PSALM 90:2
“The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. From everlasting [<i>owlam</i>] I was established, From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth.”	“...Even from everlasting [<i>owlam</i>] to everlasting , Thou art God.”

At **Proverbs 1:20-21**, wisdom is personified as a woman who cries in the streets. As is seen by examining the context, there is no indication in this passage that the wisdom which is being discussed in Proverbs 1-9 is to be associated with Christ. Nevertheless, even if one takes the position that the Watchtower Society maintains (that this wisdom is referring to Christ), one would have to come to the conclusion that Jesus is just as eternal as God is, since it is obvious that wisdom could not have been created. Proverbs 8:22-23 cannot be used to prove that Jesus is a created being. In fact, quite the opposite is true, for by utilizing the Society’s position, one can argue for the eternal nature of Christ from these passages!

“HOW MUCH WAS THE RANSOM?”

“AT MATTHEW 4:1, Jesus is spoken of as being ‘tempted by the Devil.’...But what test of loyalty would that be if Jesus were God? **Could God rebel against himself? No,....So if Jesus had been God, he could not have been tempted.**—James 1:13....Jesus, **no more and no less than a perfect human**, became a ransom that **compensated exactly** for what Adam lost—the right to perfect human life on earth...The perfect human life of Jesus was the **‘corresponding ransom’** required by divine justice—**no more, no less**....If Jesus, however, were part of a Godhead, the ransom price would have been infinitely higher than what God’s own Law required....How could any part of an almighty Godhead—Father, Son, or holy spirit—ever be lower than angels?”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 14-15

The Society is correct when they state that God cannot be tempted (James 1:13). This is why Jesus Christ, who has the nature of God, took on an addition nature—that of a human who yet retained His full Deity as God (Colossians 2:9). Although Jesus took on the nature of a man, His two natures **did not merge** into one nature so that he would become some sort of a half-man/half-God being; but rather, He retained His full Divine nature as God while laying aside some of His Divine qualities in order to experience all the temptations of a human. The books of Philippians and Hebrews explain:

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“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although **He existed in the form of God**, did not regard **equality with God** a thing to be grasped, **but emptied Himself**, taking the form of a bond-servant, **and being made in the likeness of men**. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross....Since then the children share in flesh and blood, **He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death**, that is, the devil;...For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. **Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things**, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, **to make propitiation for the sins of the people**. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted....For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, **but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.**”—Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14, 16-18; 4:15

This is the beauty of Trinitarian theology. Our God not only cares deeply for each one of us and graciously supplies all our needs; but our God is able to “sympathize with our weaknesses” as He took on our nature, He lived the perfect life in our place, endured all the trials we endure, paid the ultimate price for our sins through a torturous death, and He now offers us His perfection in exchange for our sin. As the God-man, his death has infinite value and eternally covers not only the sin of Adam but each one of our personal sins if we personally accept His “free gift” of redemption.

“For the wages of sin is death, but the **free gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
—Romans 6:23

“...the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us **from all sin**....If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from **all unrighteousness.**”—1 John 1:7, 9

“And the witness is this, that God has **given** us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. **He who has the Son has the life**; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that **you may know** that you have eternal life.”—1 John 5:11-13

If, as the Society claims, all that was necessary for the ransom sacrifice was a “perfect human,” why didn’t God create one from scratch instead of sending His own Son? Psalm 49:7 states, “**No man can by any means redeem his brother, Or give to God a ransom for him....**” Thus, we see that a mere human would not have been sufficient for the ransom sacrifice; for just as Romans 5:15-17 describes, Jesus’ sacrifice was far greater than Adam’s transgression because His sacrifice covered not just the one sin of Adam, but the sin of “many” people. Furthermore, Galatians 1:1 states that Paul was an apostle “...not sent from men, nor through **the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father....**” At this passage, Paul plainly communicates the fact that Christ is more than just a human, and he ranks Jesus on the same level with God the Father in position and authority. Note the exclamation of the disciples at Matthew 8:27: “What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the

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sea obey Him?” Jesus is more than just a mere human, for He desires that all mankind render to Him the same honor and worship that they render to the Father.¹⁷

Contrary to the claims of the Society, the Greek word for ransom “*antilutron*” (αντιλυτρον) merely involves the idea of “substitution”—not necessarily a strict “no more, no less” type of correspondence. *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* states:

“In these passages the preposition is *anti*, which has a vicarious significance, indicating that the ‘ransom’ holds good for those who, accepting it as such, no longer remain in death since Christ suffered death in their stead. The change of preposition in 1 Tim. 2:6, where the word *antilutron*, a **substitutionary ‘ransom,’** is used, is significant. There the preposition is *huper*, ‘**on behalf of,**’ and the statement is made that He ‘gave Himself a ransom for all,’...”—*Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, pp. 506-507

Mark 10:45 in the Society’s *New World Translation* states, “For even the Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom [*lutron*] **in exchange** [*anti*] **for many.**”

JESUS THE “ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON”

“THE Bible calls Jesus the ‘only-begotten Son’ of God. (John 1:14; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9) Trinitarians say that since God is eternal, so the Son for God is eternal. But how can a person be a son and at the same time be as old as his father?...Does that sound logical to you? **Can a man father a son without begetting him?**...Hebrews 11:17 speaks of Isaac as Abraham’s ‘only-begotten son.’...The basic Greek word for ‘only-begotten’ used for Jesus and Isaac is *mo-no-ge-nes*, from *mo’nos*, meaning ‘only,’ and *gi’no-mai*, a root word meaning ‘to generate,’ ‘to become (come into being),’ states **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance**....So Jesus, the only-begotten Son, had a beginning to his life. And **Almighty God can rightly be called his Begetter, or Father, in the same sense that an earthly father, like Abraham, begets a son.** (Hebrew 11:17)....Hence, the phrase ‘Son of God’ refers to Jesus as a separate created being, not as part of a Trinity. As the Son of God, he could not be God himself, for **John 1:18** says: ‘No one has ever seen God.’—*RS*, Catholic edition. The disciples viewed Jesus as the ‘one mediator between God and men,’ not as God himself. (**1 Timothy 2:5**) Since by definition a mediator is someone separate from those who need mediation, **it would be a contradiction for Jesus to be one entity with either of the parties he is trying to reconcile.**”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 15-16

Concerning Jesus’ claim to be “Son of God,” the Watchtower Society argues, “Can a man father a son without begetting him?...Almighty God can rightly be called his Begetter, or Father, **in the same sense that an earthly father, like Abraham, begets a son.**” What is the Society implying? Are they implying

¹⁷ See John 5:23 and compare Revelation 4:10-11 with Revelation 5:11-14

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that Jehovah literally begot Jesus in the “same way” humans beget their children? If so, who is Jehovah’s wife? Are they saying that Mary was literally the wife of God, and therefore, could not be a virgin? Although every Jehovah’s Witness would cringe at the implications of these assertions, these are the logical conclusions one can draw if he reasons the way the Society does here. Bowman comments:

“The JW’s are employing an argument having the following logical form: (a) All sons are begotten; (b) the prehuman Jesus was a son; therefore (c) Jesus was begotten; but (d) all who are begotten also begin to exist at some point in time, and are thus creatures; therefore (e) Jesus, having been begotten, must also be a creature. This sounds good, and it is logically valid, meaning that *if* the premises, or assertions of fact on which the argument is based, are true, then the conclusion would also have to be true. But consider the following parallel argument: (a) All sons had mothers; (b) the prehuman Jesus was a son; therefore (c) the prehuman Jesus had a mother. The argument may also be put this way: (d) All who are begotten have a mother; therefore (e) Jesus, having been begotten, also had a mother. There are only two ways to escape this argument. The first is to point out that the Bible does not *say* that Jesus had a heavenly Mother. This does not actually refute the argument, but it shows that biblically there may be something wrong with it. The second is to argue that **what is true of earthly fathers and sons need not be true of the divine Father and his divine Son**. What this does is to show that the statements ‘all sons had mothers’ and ‘all who are begotten had mothers’ are hasty generalizations—they are only true of *earthly* beings....**Moreover, what is true of earthly fathers and sons (that the sons are always younger than the fathers and are born in time) is not necessarily true of the eternal Father and his Son.**”—*Why You Should Believe in the Trinity*, pp. 82-83

Contrary to the Society’s arguments, the Jewish people in Jesus’ day understood the term “son of...” to mean “of the order or nature of...” Therefore, when Jesus claimed to be the “Son of God,” the Jews understood Him to be claiming to be “of the order and nature of God.” Note the following passages:

- **1 KINGS 20:35**: “Sons of the prophets” means “of the nature of the prophets.”
- **NEHEMIAH 12:28**: “Sons of the singers” means “of the order of the singers.”
- **EPHESIANS 2:2**: “Sons of disobedience” means “having a disobedient nature.”
- **JOHN 6:62**: “Son of Man” means “of the order and nature of Man.”¹⁸
- **JOHN 5:18**: “Son of God” means “of the order and nature of God.”

“For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was **calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.**”—John 5:18

“The Jews answered him, ‘We have a **law**, and by that law He ought to die because **He made Himself out to be the Son of God.**’ ”—John 19:7¹⁹

¹⁸ Jesus was not begotten by a man. God is not a Man (Hosea 11:9), and Mary was a “virgin” (Matt 1:23-25). Therefore we conclude that Jesus is called the “Son of Man” in the sense that He has the nature of Man.

¹⁹ Compare with Leviticus 24:16 where Jewish law required stoning for those who claimed to be God.

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Scripture refers to Jesus as the “only-begotten” Son of God. While it is true that *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* does render the Greek word *monogenes* as “only-born, i.e. sole:—only (begotten, child)”²⁰, under the section “Plan of the Book” found on page 5, *Strong’s Concordance* notes that these definitions are merely “the different **renderings** of the word in the Authorized English Version.” Therefore, these renderings found in *Strong’s Concordance* do not necessarily convey the complete definitions of the Biblical words. Concerning the term *monogenese*, James White²¹ observes:

“The translation ‘only-begotten’ is inferior to ‘unique.’ It was thought that the term came from *μονος* (*monos*), meaning ‘only’ and *γενναω* (*gennaō*), meaning ‘begotten.’ **However, further research has determined that the term is derived not from *γενναω* but from *γενος* (*genos*), meaning ‘kind’ or ‘type.’ Hence the better translation, ‘unique’ or ‘one of a kind.’** See Louw and Nida, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (1988)

p. 591; Newman and Nida, *A Translator’s Handbook on the Gospel of John*, 1980, p. 24; and Moulton and Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, 1930, pp. 416-417.”²²

At **Hebrews 11:17**, Isaac is called Abraham’s “only-begotten son.” Since Isaac was not the only son born to Abraham,²³ it is clear from the context of Hebrews 11 that Isaac is called Abraham’s “only-begotten” in the sense of his **uniqueness** as God’s covenant purposes were to be carried out through Isaac and his descendants. In the same way, Jesus is called the “only-begotten” Son of God in the sense of His uniqueness as the second person of the Triune God.

Endeavoring to argue that by virtue of the fact that people have visibly “seen” Jesus, this proves that He cannot be God, the Society quotes **John 1:18** which states that “No man has seen God at any time....” Is this a valid argument? Didn’t Isaiah see Jehovah in His temple (Isaiah 6:1-5)? By cross-referencing John 12:41 with Isaiah 6,²⁴ it becomes evident that the Jehovah that Isaiah saw is Jesus!

ISAIAH 6:1, 3-5	JOHN 12:36-37, 41-42
“In the year King Uzziah’s death, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted....And one called out to another and said, ‘Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.’ And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called	“These things Jesus spoke.... <i>yet</i> they were not believing in Him ; that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled....These things Isaiah said, because he saw His glory , and he spoke of Him . Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him....”

²⁰ *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, by James Strong, (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA) p. 49

²¹ James White is a scholar in residence in the College of Christian Studies, Grand Canyon University, Director of Ministries for Alpha and Omega Ministries, and has earned a B.A. from Grand Canyon University and a M.A. from Fuller Theological Seminary.

²² *The King James Only Controversy*, by James White, 1995, (Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, MN) p. 259

²³ Genesis 16 recounts the story of how Ishmael was born to Abraham through Sarai’s handmaid Hagar.

²⁴ The Society’s *New World Translation* also cross-references this passage here at John 12:41 to Isaiah 6:1.

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out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, ‘Woe is me, for I am ruined!...For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. ’ ”	
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Since no one has seen God the Father, He has revealed Himself in the unique, one and only God—Jesus Christ. “No one has ever seen God, but **God the One and Only**, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.”—John 1:18, *New International Version*

“ ‘Not that any man **has seen the Father**, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.’ ...Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, “Show us the Father”?**’ ”—John 6:46; 14:9

At **1 Timothy 2:5**, Jesus is said to be the mediator **between** God and men. The Society argues that Jesus cannot be God because He is the mediator “between” God and man and “a mediator is someone separate from those who need mediation.” Is this a tenable argument? If we take the Society’s statement to its logical conclusion, we would also have to draw the connection that Jesus, by virtue of His “mediator” role **between** God and man, cannot be a man. When we consider this fact, it is evident that the Society’s reasoning falls apart on account of the latter part of the verse which demonstrates that although Jesus is the mediator **between** God and man, He is still **a man**: “For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, ***the man Christ Jesus.***”

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The Society endeavors to argue that because Jesus is “distinguished from God” as a separate person from the Father, is considered “subordinate” to God, being in a “secondary position” to that of the Father, is “submissive” to God’s will, and had “limited knowledge”, He cannot be God. After all, the Society argues, “Jesus never claimed to be God.” (*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 16-20)

Many of these arguments against the Trinity are groundless when viewed in light of the incarnation. As already discussed, when Jesus became a man, He laid aside His privileges as God in order to experience all the struggles of humanity.¹ In His Deity, Christ is “equal” to God the Father, but in His humanity, He is in a lesser position than that of the Father (John 14:28). Let’s discuss some of the passages addressed in the *Trinity* brochure:

JOHN 20:17:

“...I ascend to **My Father** and your Father, and **My God** and your God.”

The Society argues that “Since Jesus *had* a God, his Father, he could not at the same time *be* that God.” —*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 17

One fact about this passage that the Society fails to note is that Jesus was always very careful to distinguish His relationship with the Father from the relationship His disciples had with the Father. He never addressed God as “our Father” in reference to Himself and the disciples, but rather addressed Him as “My Father” and “your Father.”² This is significant to note because Jesus is God’s Son **by nature**; whereas, His disciples are God’s sons **by adoption** (John 1:12). As the “Son of God,” Jesus has the **same nature** as God (John 5:18, 19:7), but in the incarnation, Jesus took on the nature of man and thus became the “Son of Man.”³ While in His Divine nature, Jesus still has all the power and authority of God, **it is in his human nature that Jesus refers to the Father as His God.**

“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....**”—Hebrews 1:3

In human affairs, the “right hand” is the symbol of strength and power. Someone who is said to be the president’s “right hand man” is someone who is in a high position of honor. Thus, Scripture often

¹ i.e., having limited knowledge, needing to “learn obedience” through suffering, experiencing hunger, sleep, pain, death, etc.

² In the Lord’s prayer of Matthew 6:9 where Jesus address the Father as “Our Father,” Jesus is teaching His disciples how to pray rather than including Himself in that prayer.

³ See John 6:62 c.f. Daniel 7:13. The term “Son of Man” is a Messianic title which points to Jesus’ humanity as His second coming will be in the flesh.

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employs the phrase “sitting at the right hand of the Father” to denote Christ’s preeminence as the one in the highest position of authority.

PSALM 98:9	JOHN 5:22-23
“Before the LORD ; for He is coming to judge the earth ; He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.”	“For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.”

1 CORINTHIANS 8:6:

“yet for us there is *but* **one God**, the Father...and **one Lord**, Jesus Christ....”

Arguing that because the Father is called “God” and Jesus is distinguished as being the “Lord,” the Society endeavors to prove that Jesus cannot be God because the Father is God. (*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 17)

When one considers the fact that no Jehovah’s Witness would argue that the Father is not “Lord” simply because Jesus is “Lord,” it is evident that this argument is groundless. In the same way that both Jesus and the Father are Lord, Jesus is just as much God as the Father is God. In the New Testament, we read that Jesus is addressed as God on several occasions.⁴ While **1 Timothy 1:17** reveals that there is only one God, it is also significant to note that although the Father is called the “Lord of Lords” at Deuteronomy 10:17 and Jesus is called the “Lord of Lords” at Revelation 17:14 and 19:16, **Jude 4** points out that there is only one “Lord.”

JEHOVAH IS LORD OF ALL	JESUS IS LORD OF ALL
MATTHEW 11:25: “At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.... ’ ”	ACTS 10:36: “The word which he sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)....” ⁵
DEUTERONOMY 10:17: “For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords , the great, the mighty, and the awesome God....”	REVELATION 17:14; 19:16: “...and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings.... And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, ‘ KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. ’ ”

⁴ See Matthew 1:23; John 1:1,18; John 20:28; Hebrews 1:8; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1

⁵ The Watchtower’s *New World Translation* mistranslates this verse by adding the word “[other]” to the text of Acts 10:36: “...through Jesus Christ: this One is Lord of all [others].”—*New World Translation*

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“...ungodly persons who...deny **our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.**”—Jude 4

MARK 10:17-18:

“And as He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and *began* asking Him, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘**Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.**’ ”

The Society argues that “...Jesus was saying that no one is as good as God is, not even Jesus himself.” —*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 17

Nowhere in this passage does Jesus imply that He is not good. On the contrary, according to the context, Jesus was helping the rich ruler recognize that the attribute of “goodness” which the ruler had applied to Him was a quality that only God possesses. Thus, Jesus was forcing the ruler to recognize that either He is “good” and is therefore God, or He is bad and is therefore only a man.

HABAKKUK 1:12:

“...Are you not from long ago, O Jehovah? O my God, **my Holy One, you do not die.**”
—*New World Translation*

The Society argues that Jesus can’t be God because God doesn’t die, and the Bible clearly reveals that Jesus died. (*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 18)

One of the attributes of our immutable God is that He does not die; and in this passage, Jehovah God is called “the Holy One” who does not die. Yet, at Acts 2:27, 3:14, and John 6:69, we read that this “Holy One” is Jesus who, as foretold by David at Psalm 16:10, was to die but whose body would not “undergo decay.” How can this be? If the Holy One does not die, how can Jesus as the “Holy One” die? We can reconcile this by recognizing that according to Psalm 49:7, more was required than just a mere man to atone for the sins of mankind.⁶ Thus, it was necessary for Jehovah God to become man in the person of Christ in order to die and atone for the sins of the world. Although Jesus (in His human nature) had completely died, He (in His Divine nature) still possessed the power to raise Himself.

“...I lay down My life that **I may take it again.** No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. **I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again....**Destroy this temple, and in three days **I will raise it up.**”—John 10:17-18; 2:19

⁶ Psalm 49:7: “No man can by any means redeem his brother, Or give to God a ransom for him.”

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CHAPTER 5: IS JESUS INFERIOR TO GOD?

ISAIAH 43:15; 47:4; 54:5	JOHN 6:69
“ I am Jehovah your Holy One , the Creator of Israel, your King....There is One repurchasing us. Jehovah of armies is his name, the Holy One of Israel... Jehovah of armies being his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Repurchaser. The God of the whole earth he will be called. ”— <i>New World Translation</i>	“And we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God.”— <i>New World Translation</i> ACTS 2:27: “Because Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.”— <i>New American Standard Bible</i>

MARK 13:32:

“But of that day or hour **no one knows**, not even the angels in heaven, **nor the Son**, but the Father *alone*.”

“Had Jesus been the equal Son part of a Godhead, he would have known what the Father knows. But Jesus did not know, for he was not equal to God.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 19

Prior to the incarnation, Jesus was one in person and one in nature—being totally Divine. At the incarnation, Jesus took on a human nature and henceforth became two in nature while yet remaining one in person. **As a result, attributes from His Divine and human natures both became credited to His one person.** In this passage, Jesus was speaking from the standpoint of His human nature; thus, demonstrating the limitations of His human nature by not being able to foretell the future. Nevertheless, there were many other occasions where Jesus, speaking from the perspective of His divinity, demonstrated the Divine quality of omniscience. Note the following passages:

1 KINGS 8:39	JOHN 2:24-25
“then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart thou knowest, for Thou alone dost know the hearts of all the sons of men; ”	“But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men , and because He did not need anyone to bear witness concerning man for He Himself knew what was in man. ”

- **JOHN 16:30:** “Now we know that You **know all things**....”
- **JOHN 18:4:** “Jesus therefore, **knowing all the things** that were coming upon Him, went forth....”
- **MATTHEW 9:4:** “And Jesus **knowing their thoughts** said....”
- **JOHN 21:17:** “...And he said to Him, ‘Lord, **You know all things**; You know that I love you....’ ”

JEREMIAH 17:9-10	REVELATION 2:18, 23
“ The heart is more deceitful than all else	“ The Son of God , who has eyes like a

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And is desperately sick; **Who can understand it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds.**”

flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, **says this:** ‘...and all the churches **will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.’ ”**

At **1 Kings 8:39**, we read that God is the **only one** who knows the hearts of all men; yet as seen in these and many other passages, Jesus knew the hearts of all men. How can Jesus have the very omniscience of Jehovah and not be Jehovah Himself?

1 CORINTHIANS 11:3:

“But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and **God is the head of Christ.**”

The Society uses this passage as well as 1 Corinthians 15:28 to try to prove that since Jesus is “subordinate” to the Father, He cannot be God. (*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 20)

1 Corinthians 11:3 states that “the man is the head of a woman.” Are women inferior to men because men are to be in authority over women? **Luke 2:51** states that Christ was in “subjection” to Mary and Joseph. Was Christ **inferior** to them because He was in “subjection” to them?

While it is true that a **functional subordination** or **functional hierarchy** exists among the persons of the Triune God, they are still equal in their Divine nature. Jesus is equal to God the Father in His Divine being (John 10:30). Yet, because Jesus still possesses His human nature (1 Timothy 2:5), He is still in submission to the Father (1 Cor. 15:28).

In the same way that a wife is not considered “inferior” to her husband because she is in subjection to his authority, the functional subordination that exists among the persons of the Trinity does not in any way imply that Jesus is inferior to the Father or any less God than the Father is God. What 1 Corinthians 15:28 is really teaching concerning the subjection of Christ is that once Jesus’ mediator role is completed and all things are in subjection to Him, He will surrender His kingdom to the Triune Jehovah God who will rule forever.

“ ‘Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet.’ **For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him.** But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.”
—Hebrews 2:8

DEUTERONOMY 32:39	JOHN 5:21; 10:28; ACTS 9:34
“See now that I, I am He, and there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death	“For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives

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and **give life**. I have wounded, and **it is I who heal**; and **there is no one who can deliver from My hand.**”

life to whom He wishes....and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; **and no one shall snatch them out of My hand....**And Peter said to him, ‘Aeneas, **Jesus Christ heals you**; arise, and make your bed.’ And immediately he arose.”

JOHN 14:28:

“...I go to the Father; for the **Father is greater** [μειζον —*meizon*] **than I.**”

“The Bible’s position is clear. Not only is Almighty God, Jehovah, a personality separate from Jesus but **He is at all times his superior**....And this is why Jesus himself said: ‘The Father is greater than I.’—John 14:28”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 20

There is a significant reason why Jesus (in indicating His relationship to the Father) chose to use the term *meizon* (μειζων) translated “greater” rather than the term *kreitton* (κρειττων) which means “better”. *Meizon* denotes a **greater position**, whereas *kreitton* denotes a **better nature**. The difference between these two words can be seen at **John 14:12**, where we read that believers will do “greater” (*meizon*) works than Jesus. Since we know that this verse is not implying that we will do “better” works than Jesus, it is clear from the context that Jesus used this same word to demonstrate the greatness of the Father’s position (being in heaven) as opposed to Jesus’ position (being here on earth).

A modern illustration of this type of relationship can be seen when we analyze the Watchtower’s own authority structure: A Presiding Overseer can be said to be “greater” than an elder. Yet, by saying this, one is not implying that the elder is of an inferior nature than the Overseer, but rather, that the Overseer’s jurisdiction is “greater” than the elder’s jurisdiction. In the same way, it is only in Jesus’ **human nature** that the Father can be said to be “greater” than He. However, this illustration cannot be used to refer to Jesus’ relationship to angels because at **Hebrews 1:4** the other term (*kreitton*), translated “better,” is employed to demonstrate that Jesus is “better” than the angels **in His very nature**.

BULLETIN OF THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY:

On pages 19-20 and 28 of the Society’s brochure, they reference the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* in England endeavoring to support their assertion that Jesus is not God and never claimed to be. They quote the *Bulletin* as stating: “The fact has to be faced that New Testament research over, say, the last thirty or forty years has been leading an increasing number of reputable New Testament scholars to the conclusion that Jesus...certainly never believed himself to be God.” However, the Society left out a very important statement in their quotation. The part they left out is as follows:

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“...New Testament scholars to the conclusion that Jesus himself may not have claimed any of the christological titles which the Gospels ascribe to him, not even the functional designation ‘Christ’, and certainly never believed himself to be God.”

—*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. 50, p. 251

The idea that Jesus never claimed to be the “Christ” is unquestionably against the plain teaching of Scripture.⁷ Even the Society would agree that the idea that Jesus never “claimed” the title of “Christ” is erroneous. Thus, in order to conceal the fact that this source is not credible, they placed an ellipsis in the quotation and concealed this inaccurate statement from their readers.

On page 28, in reference to the Greek word for God (*theos*) being used for Christ, the Society goes on to cite the *Bulletin* as stating that Catholic theologian Karl Rahner taught that “in none of these instances is ‘theos’ used in such a manner as to identify Jesus with him who elsewhere in the New Testament figures as ‘ho Theos,’ that is, the Supreme God.” However, it is difficult to justify Rahner’s position on this subject in light of the fact that the *Bulletin* mentioned that Rahner “considers that there are **reliable applications of ‘theos’ to Christ** in six texts (Romans ix. 5f.; John i. I, 18. xx. 28: I John v. 20: and Titus ii. 13).”—*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. 50, p. 253.

⁷ See Matthew 16:20

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CHAPTER 6: THE HOLY SPIRIT—A PERSON OR FORCE?

“THE Bible’s use of ‘holy spirit’ indicates that it is a controlled force...it can be likened to **electricity**, a force that can be adapted to perform a great variety of operations....On one occasion the holy spirit appeared as a dove. On another occasion it appeared as tongues of fire—**never as a person**....some Bible texts say that the spirit speaks....The action of the spirit in such instances is like that of **radio waves**....”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 20-22

A ttributing the actions of the Holy Spirit as being a mere force like “electricity” or “radio waves,” the Society asserts that the Holy Spirit “never” appears as a person. As discussed previously, what qualifies a being as a “person” are the **attributes** of personhood that the being possesses and not whether or not the being possesses a physical body. Simply because Satan has never appeared in the form of a man, this does not in the least imply that he is not a person. In the same way, simply because the Holy Spirit has appeared in other forms than that of a man, this does not in the least imply that He is not a person—especially since He possesses all the qualifying attributes of personhood. Note the following examples:

THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS A MIND:

ROMANS 8:27: “and He who searches the hearts knows what the **mind** of the Spirit is, because He **intercedes** for the saints according to *the will of God*.”

1 CORINTHIANS 2:10-11: “For to us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit **searches** all things, even the depths of God....Even so the *thoughts* of God no one **knows** except the Spirit of God.”

THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS EMOTIONS:

EPHESIANS 4:30: “And do not **grieve** the Holy Spirit of God....”

ISAIAH 63:10: “But they...rebelled and made his holy spirit **feel hurt**.”—*New World Translation*

MICAH 2:7: “...Is the Spirit of the LORD **impatient**? Are these **His doings**?”

HEBREWS 10:29: “...and has **insulted** the Spirit of grace?”

THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS A WILL AND ISSUES COMMANDS:

1 CORINTHIANS 12:11: “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as **He wills**.”

ACTS 8:29; 13:2,4; 16:6: “And the Spirit **said** to Philip, ‘Go up and join this chariot....The Holy Spirit **said**, ‘Set apart **for Me** Barnabas and Saul for the work to which **I have called** them.’...So, being **sent** out by the Holy Spirit....having been **forbidden** by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.”

2 SAMUEL 23:2: “The Spirit of the LORD **spoke** by me, And **His** word was on my tongue.”

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS TREATED AS A PERSON AND DOES THINGS THAT ONLY A PERSON CAN DO:

JOHN 14:16; 15:26: “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you **another Helper**....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 **bear witness** of Me....”

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Concerning the Holy Spirit being our Helper, Ron Rhodes notes:

“Now there are two words in the Greek language for the English word ‘another’: The first one (*heteros*) means ‘another of a different kind.’ **The other Greek word (*allos*) means ‘another of the same kind.’ It is this second word, *allos*, that is used in John 14:16.** So Jesus is saying that He will ask the Father to send another Helper **of the same kind as Himself**—that is, personal!”—*Reasoning from the Scriptures with Jehovah’s Witnesses*, 1993, p. 212

ROMANS 8:26: “And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself **intercedes** for *us* with groanings too deep for words.”

JOHN 14:26: “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will **teach** you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

1 TIMOTHY 4:1: “But the Spirit explicitly **says** that in later times some will fall away....”

ACTS 5:3-4: “But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to **lie** to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied to men, but to **God.**’ ”

Now let’s take some of these same verses and substitute the word “electricity” or “radio waves” for the Holy Spirit and see how they would read.

“...but the *radio waves* Himself **intercedes** for us **with groanings too deep for words**; and He who searches the hearts [God] knows what the **mind** of the *radio waves* is....for the *electricity* **searches** all things, even the depths of God...Even so the thoughts of God no one **knows** except the *electricity* of God...But they themselves rebelled and made his *electricity* **feel hurt**...And do not **grieve** the *radio waves* of God...How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who...has **insulted** the *radio waves* of grace?...Is the *electricity* of the LORD **impatient**?...But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart **to lie** to the *electricity*...’ ”

How can an impersonal force express personality? I can’t make the electricity in my room express my personality any more than I can cause radio waves to “feel” hurt. As one considers these passages, the irrationality of interpreting the Holy Spirit as a mere force is plainly manifest. The following is a discussion of some of the arguments the Watchtower Society employs endeavoring to justify their reasoning:

“...regarding Samson, Judges 14:6 relates: ‘The spirit of Yahweh seized on him....’ ...**Did a divine person actually enter or seize Samson**, manipulating his body to do what he did? No....Acts 2:1-4 relates that the disciples were assembled together at Pentecost when...‘they all became **filled** with holy spirit....’ ...People are urged to become **filled** with holy spirit instead of with wine. (Ephesians 5:18)...Such expressions would not be so common if the holy spirit were actually a person.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 21-22

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Is this a viable argument? Let’s consider the following passage:

“And when He had come out onto the land, He was met by a certain man from the city who was **possessed with demons**....And seeing Jesus, he cried out and fell before Him....For He had been commanding the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had **seized** him many times....And Jesus asked him. ‘What is your name?’ And he said, ‘Legion’; for **many demons had entered him**.”—Luke 8:27-30

Is it credible to argue that the demons or fallen angels are not persons because they enter and “seize” humans? Is the apostle Paul any less of a person because he states at 2 Timothy 4:6, “I am already being **poured out** as a drink offering....”¹ What about the following passages where we read that both the Father and Jesus “fill” people?

“...that you may be **filled up** to all the fulness of God....one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and **in all**.”—Ephesians 3:19; 4:6

“...which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead....and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, **the fulness of Him who fills all in all**....so that **Christ may dwell in your hearts** through faith....Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that **Jesus Christ is in you**—unless indeed you fail the test.”—Ephesians 1:20, 22-23; 3:17; 2 Corinthians 13:5

Since we know that it is a fact that both the Father, Jesus, and demons are not any less persons simply because they “fill” people, we must therefore conclude that this Watchtower argument is untenable, for the Holy Spirit is not any less a person than the Father and the Son.

“In the Scriptures it is not unusual for something to be personified. Wisdom is said to have children. (Luke 7:35) Sin and death are called kings. (Romans 5:14, 21)...But, of course, sin is not a spirit person; **nor does personifying the holy spirit make it a spirit person**. Similarly, at 1 John 5:6-8 (NE) not only the spirit but also ‘the water, and the blood’ are said to be ‘witnesses.’ **But water and blood are obviously not persons, and neither is the holy spirit a person**....At Matthew 28:19 reference is made to ‘the name...of the holy spirit.’ But the word ‘name’ does not always mean a personal name....Robertson’s *Word Pictures in the New Testament* says: ‘The use of name (*onoma*) here is a common one in the Septuagint and the papyri for **power or authority**.’ ” —*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 21-22

Concerning the Scripture’s personification of wisdom and death, Peter Barnes² notes:

¹ See also Philippians 2:17

² Peter Barnes, who was a Jehovah’s Witness for 30 years, served as a Circuit Overseer over 16 Kingdom Halls before he encountered Christ. He currently directs the “Out of Darkness Into Light” ministry based in San Diego, CA.

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“It is vitally important to understand that the purely abstract attribute of wisdom is personified only once in the entire New Testament. Also, sin is personified just **five** times, and death **six** times, **on the other hand, the Holy Spirit is personified in excess of one hundred times. There is positively no valid parallel between the way in which the New Testament writers spoke of the Holy Spirit and their sporadic personification of utterly abstract things.**”

—*The Truth About Jesus And The Trinity*, 1994, p. 48

The assertion that the Holy Spirit is not a person because he is associated with impersonal objects is another argument that is not credible for Scripture also associates Jesus with impersonal objects such as the following:

DOOR (John 10:9)	VINE (John 15:1)	ROCK (1 Cor. 10:4)	STONE (1 Peter 2:6-8)
BREAD (John 6:41)	TRUTH (John 14:6)	LIGHT (John 8:12)	WORD (John 1:1)

In regard to the Watchtower argument that the word “name” used in reference to the Holy Spirit only refers to power and authority, Robert Bowman comments:

“The booklet offers two points in rebuttal to this argument. First, they state that ‘the word “name” does not always mean a personal name, either in Greek or in English,’ and give as an example the expression ‘in the name of the law’ (p. 22). No examples from biblical Greek, however, are given. In fact, the Greek word for ‘name’ (*onoma*) is used some **228 times** in the New Testament, and **except for four places-names** (Mark 14:32; Luke 1:26; 24:13; Acts 28:7; *see also Rev. 3:12*) **always refers to persons**. Reading the modern idiom ‘in the name of the law’ back into Matthew 28:19 is simply anachronistic. Second, the booklet quotes A.T. Robertson’s *Word Pictures in the New Testament* as saying that the word *name* is used ‘for power and authority.’ That is true, of course, but **it stands for the power or authority of someone, never some impersonal force**. An impersonal force cannot have authority; only a person can.”—*Why You Should Believe in the Trinity*, pp. 114-115

“JESUS spoke of the holy spirit as a ‘**helper**,’ and he said it would teach, guide, and speak. (John 14:16, 26; 16:13)...On the other hand, **when the neuter Greek word for spirit (*pneu'ma*) is used, the neuter pronoun ‘it’ is properly employed.**”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 22

While it is true that Greek grammar rules require that neuter personal pronouns be used in conjunction with neuter nouns, Peter Barnes is quick to observe that “in the very chapter to which the Watchtower article makes reference, namely John 16:13-14, there are **three strikingly clear instances** where the

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masculine personal pronoun is used in connection with the neuter word ‘Spirit.’”³ In other words, the apostle John broke Greek grammar rules when he wrote John 16:13-14, because he used the personal pronoun “he” in reference to the neuter gender noun “Spirit.” How is that for indicating personality! Ron Rhodes also comments:

“The primary reason the Jehovah’s Witnesses say the Holy Spirit is an ‘active force’ is that the Greek word for ‘Spirit’ (*pneuma*) is neuter. However, as noted above, **this is faulty reasoning, since the gender of the word has to do with the grammatical form of the word and not actual physical gender. For example, one will find that in Scripture, neuter terms are used in reference to infants (Luke 1:41,44; 2:16; 18:15), children (Mark 5:39-41), girls (Matthew 9:24,25; Mark 5:41,42), unclean spirits (Matthew 12:24,27,28; Mark 7:26,29,30), and angels (Hebrews 1:14).** Obviously, each of these beings have personality, even though a neuter term is used in reference to them. We can safely conclude, then, that the use of a neuter term does not indicate a lack of personality.”—*Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah’s Witnesses*, 1993, pp. 213-214

THE TRIUNE GOD:

On page 21 of the Trinity brochure, the Society quotes Edmund Fortman as stating: “Although this spirit is often described in personal terms, it seems quite clear that the sacred writers [of the Hebrew Scriptures] never conceived or presented this spirit as a distinct person.” However, they fail to note that Fortman goes on to say:

“Perhaps it can be said that some of these writing about word and wisdom and spirit **did provide a climate in which plurality within the Godhead was conceivable to Jews.** However, **these writers definitely do give us the words** that the New Testament uses to express the trinity of persons, Father, Son, Word, Wisdom, Spirit.”—*The Triune God*, p. 9

On page 22, the Society goes on to quote Fortman as stating: “The Jews never regarded the spirit as a person; nor is there any solid evidence that any Old Testament writer held this view....The Holy Spirit is usually presented in the Synoptics [Gospels] and in Acts as a divine force or power.” Notice how the first statement is separated from the second statement by an ellipsis. The Society pulled these statements from two different pages of Fortman’s book and took them out of context. Note the contexts from which these two quotes are taken:

“**The spirit of Yahweh was often described in personal terms.** The spirit was grieved, guided men, instructed them, caused them to rest (Ps 143.10; Neh 9.20; Is 63.10,14). But it seems quite clear that the Jews never regarded the spirit as a person; nor is there any solid evidence that any Old Testament writer held this view. A few scholars today maintain, however, that even though the spirit is usually presented as an impersonal divine force, **there is an underlying assumption that the spirit was a conscious agent, which**

³ *The Truth About Jesus And The Trinity*, by Peter Barnes, 1989, 1994, p. 49

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‘provided a climate in which plurality within the Godhead was conceivable.’ ”

—The Triune God, p. 6

“The Holy Spirit is usually presented in the Synoptics and in Acts as a divine force or power. But in a few passages the sacred writers leave a vivid impression that for them He was someone distinct from both Father and Son with a distinct personal existence.”—The Triune God, p. 15

Scripture not only reveals that the Holy Spirit is a person, but He is also God:

- **ACTS 5:3-4:** “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit....You have not lied to men, but to God.”
- **2 CORINTHIANS 3:17:** “Now Jehovah is the Spirit; and where the spirit of Jehovah is, there is freedom.”—*New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*

JEHOVAH SPOKE	THE HOLY SPIRIT SPOKE
ISAIAH 6:8-10: “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’...And He said, ‘Go, and tell this people: “Keep on listening, but do not perceive....Lest they see with their eyes...and return and be healed.” ’ ”	ACTS 28:25-27: “...The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, saying, ‘Go to this people and say, “You will keep on hearing, but will not understand....Lest they should see with their eyes...and return, and I should heal them.” ’ ”

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CHAPTER 7: JESUS IS GOD!

WHAT ABOUT TRINITY “PROOF TEXTS”?

“Any Bible reference offered as proof **must be understood in the context** of the consistent teaching of the entire Bible.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 23

The Society references about four passages in the New Testament where the three persons of the Trinity are manifested: **2 Corinthians 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Matthew 3:16 and 28:19.** Matthew 28:19 is especially worth noting: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the **name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit....**”

Upon examination of this passage, noting that the **definite article** (the) is placed in front of each of the persons of the Trinity, one can see how each of the persons are demonstrated as being distinct from each other. **When one considers the fact that the word “name” is singular and yet these persons are revealed as being distinct from each other, the plurality within unity of the Trinity is recognizable.** Not only does Matthew 28:19 clearly communicate the concept of composite unity within the Trinity, but by stating that believers are to baptize “in the name” of each of these persons, it indicates that each person of the Trinity possesses equal power and authority. One might wonder how the fact that baptism is to be performed in the “name” of these persons indicates that their power and authority is equal. This question can be answered by considering the following scenario: What is Scripture teaching us when it states that believers are to pray *in the name of Jesus*? Since it is obvious that by praying *in the name of Jesus*, we are actually praying *in the power and authority* of Christ, **we can conclude that Scripture is communicating the fact that by baptizing “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” we are actually doing this in the power and authority of each of these persons.** Thus, it is evident that Matthew 28:19 is one of the most vivid declarations of the Trinity found in the New Testament.

While the oneness and unity of the persons of the Trinity may not be as conclusively revealed in the other passages used to support the Trinity, when one considers the whole testimony of Scripture on this issue, it becomes evident that the Trinity is nevertheless a Biblical concept, for we know from Scripture that the Father is called God (Philippians 2:11), the Son is called God (Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20; John 1:1, 18; John 20:28; Hebrews 1:8), and the Holy Spirit is called God (Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 3:17), and yet there is only one God.

“For even if there are **so-called** gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us **there is but one God....** However at that time, **when you did not know God**, you were slaves to those which **by nature are no gods....** Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, **the only God**, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.... How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the **one and only God?**... And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, **the only true God**, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.... Before Me there was not God formed, **and there will be none after Me.** I, even I, am the LORD; And there **is no savior besides Me.... I am the first and**

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I am the last, and there is no God besides Me....Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any *other* Rock? **I know of none....**For I am God, and **there is no other**; I *am* God, and there is **no one like Me....**”—1 Corinthians 8:5-6; Galatians 4:8; 1 Timothy 1:17; John 5:44; 17:3; Isaiah 43:10-11; 44:6, 8; 46:9

The belief that there is only one God is called monotheism. The Jews, adhering to the Hebrew *Shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4) and other Old Testament passages, were monotheists who tenaciously threatened to stone anyone who would dare to commit blasphemy by claiming to be God. (Leviticus 24:16) This is why the Jews on several occasions endeavored to stone Jesus, for He was claiming to have the attributes of the one and only true God—thus declaring to be God.¹ **The Jews realized that since there is only one “true God” (John 17:3), all other “so-called” gods are, in reality, only false gods.** To the Jews, there was no middle ground. Either a being is of the true God, or he is a false god. These were the issues with which Jesus’ Jewish disciples struggled until they recognized that Jesus is in fact the true God;² just as Thomas called Jesus, “My Lord, and my God!,”³ and Jesus blessed him for believing (John 20:28-29).

While claiming to be monotheist and admitting that there is only one “true God,” Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that there are other beings who are called “gods” due to their position and authority. They place Jesus in the category of being one of these “gods.” Although on the surface, this belief may seem plausible, this belief is not monotheism, but rather, henotheism. **While henotheists assert that there is only one God we must serve and worship, they do not deny the concept that there are other divine beings who are “gods,” but who are inferior to the Almighty True God.** As can be seen by the passages noted earlier, Scripture militates against this position, for God uncompromisingly declares that He is the “only God” and “there is no one like Me.” With this as a background, we will now focus our attention on the Watchtower arguments against the Trinitarian “proof texts” referenced in the Society’s booklet.

JOHN 10:30: “I and the Father Are One”

“But Jesus himself showed what he meant by his being ‘one’ with the Father. At John 17:21,22, he prayed to God that his disciples ‘may all be one, just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in union with you, that they also may be in union with us,...that they may be one just as we are one.’ Was Jesus praying that all his disciples would become a single entity? No, obviously Jesus was praying that they would be united in thought and purpose, as he and God were....**So when he used the word ‘one’ (*hen*) in these cases, he was talking about unity of thought and purpose.**”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 24

¹ See John 5:18; John 8:58-59; John 10:30-39 and John 19:7

² See John 6:69 and cross-reference to Isaiah 54:5.

³ Psalm 35:23 calls Jehovah (Yahweh) “my God and my Lord.” It may be that Thomas, who was quite familiar with the Old Testament, had this verse in mind when he addressed Jesus as “my Lord and my God.”

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The context of **John 17:21-22** where Jesus prays that his followers would be “one” just as He and the Father are “one” is totally different from the context of John 10:30. According to 2 Corinthians 13:5, the test of being a true believer is having Christ living “in you.” When God, through the Holy Spirit, comes to dwell within a new believer (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19), He changes that person’s heart (2 Corinthians 5:17) and gives him a new nature and a new love for fellow believers (Ephesians 1:15). God imparts each believer with spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12, 14) which equip him to be able to work together in unity with other believers for the cause of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:10). **This “oneness” of “unity of purpose” found among believers, however, is different from the oneness that Jesus at John 10:30 was expressing that He and the Father possess.** This is evident by the Jews’ immediate reaction to Christ’s claim, for they took up stones to stone Him as they understood His claim to be an affirmation of Deity.

“‘I and the Father are one.’ The Jews took up stones again to stone Him....The Jews answered Him, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but **for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.**’ Jesus answered them, ‘Has it not been written in your Law, “I said, you are gods”?’ If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), **do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, “You are blaspheming,” because I said, “I am the Son of God”?**....**believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.**’ Therefore they were **seeking again to seize Him**, and He eluded their grasp.”—John 10:30, 32-36, 38-39

If Jesus was merely claiming to have “unity of purpose” with the Father (as the Society asserts), **why would the Jews try to stone Him for something that they believed they possessed—that is, unity of purpose with the Father?** If the Jews simply misunderstood Christ’s statements, why didn’t Jesus correct their misunderstanding? Instead of correcting their understanding, however, Jesus indicated that the Jews understood His statements correctly. By contrasting His claim to be the true God with the vain claims of unrighteous judges who thought of themselves as “gods” but to whom God’s judgment was pronounced (Psalm 82), Jesus demonstrated that what these judges claimed in falsehood, He is in reality—the true God!

“...the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; **for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner**....For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given **all judgment** to the Son, in order that **all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father, He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him**....**I and the Father are one**....Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, **believe also in Me**....Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; how do you say, ‘Show us the Father’?...**All things that the Father has are Mine**; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose *it* to you.”—John 5:19, 22-23; 10:30; 14:1, 9; 16:15

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JOHN 5:18: “Making Himself Equal To God”

“It says that the Jews (as at John 10:31-36) wanted to kill Jesus because ‘he was also calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God.’ **But who said that Jesus was making himself equal to God? Not Jesus. He defended himself against this false charge** in the very next verse (19): ‘To this accusation Jesus replied:... “the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees the Father doing.” ’ —*JB.*”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 24

JOHN 5:17-23:

“But He answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and **I Myself am working.**’ For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was **calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.** Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; **for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner....For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.** For not even the Father judges anyone, but **He has given all judgment to the Son, in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.**’ ”

Far from defending Himself from the Jews’ accusations, the context of John 5:18 demonstrates that Christ responded to the Jews—not by denying their claims—but by affirming that they were correct in their understanding. Notice how Jesus responded to the Jews by continuing to describe how He possesses all the power and authority of Jehovah and does things that only Jehovah can do. Finally, He claims that He receives the **same honor** and worship that Jehovah receives. Is it any wonder the Jews endeavored to stone Him for blasphemy?

DIVINE WORKS OF JEHOVAH	DIVINE WORKS OF JESUS
DEUTERONOMY 32:39: “See now that I, I am He, and there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded, and it is I who heal; and there is no one who can deliver from My hand. ”	JOHN 5:21; 10:28; ACTS 9:34: “For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes....and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.... And Peter said to him, ‘Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you.... ”
PSALM 98:9: “Before the LORD; for He is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.”	JOHN 5:22: “For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, ”
EXODUS 34:14: “for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God....”	JOHN 5:23: “in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.”

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PHILIPPIANS 2:6: “Equal With God”

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. **Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being [υπαρχω—*huparcho*] in very nature [μορφη—*morphe*] God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped [αρπαζω—*harpazo*], but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.**” —Philippians 2:4-7, *New International Version*

In the Watchtower Society’s response to Philippians 2:6, they overlook the first half of this verse which speaks of Christ having the nature of God, and **they focus instead on the second half of the verse which states that Christ did not seek to “grasp” at equality with God.** They then conclude that Philippians 2:6 is teaching that Christ is not equal in nature to God the Father. (*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 25-26)

“BEING IN VERY NATURE GOD”: 3 CONCEPTS TO NOTE:

1. The Greek word translated “being” (υπαρχω—*huparcho*) is in the present tense and therefore carries the idea of continual existence as God.⁴
2. The Greek word translated “nature” (μορφη—*morphe*) is unique in that it is only used twice in the New Testament and in both cases, only of Christ. *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old And New Testament Words* offers the following insights concerning this word:

“*morphe*...is used with particular significance in the NT, only of Christ, in Phil. 2:6,7, in the phrases ‘being in the form of God,’ and ‘taking the form of a servant.’ An excellent definition of the word is that of Gifford: ‘*morphe* is therefore properly **the nature or essence, not in the abstract, but as actually subsisting in the individual, and retained as long as the individual itself exists**....Thus in the passage before us *morphe Theou* is the **Divine nature** actually and **inseparably subsisting in the Person of Christ**....For the interpretation of “the form of God” it is sufficient to say that (1) it includes the **whole nature and essence of Deity**, and is **inseparable** from them, since **they could have no actual existence without it**; and (2) that it **does not include in itself anything “accidental” or separable**, such as particular modes of manifestation, or conditions of glory and majesty, which may at one time be attached to the “form,” at another separated from it....The true meaning of *morphe* in the expression “form of God” is confirmed by its recurrence in the corresponding phrase, “form of a servant.” It is universally admitted that the two phrases are directly antithetical, and that **“form” must therefore have the**

⁴ *The New Englishman’s Greek Concordance And Lexicon*, by Jay P. Green, Sr., 1982 (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MS), p. 883

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same sense in both.’ (From Gifford, ‘The Incarnation,’ pp. 16,19,39.)” —*Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, 1985, p. 251

In the same way that Christ possesses the “nature” of a man and, as a result, is considered to be a complete human being (not a creature who is half man and half divine), Jesus possesses the “nature” of God and is therefore considered to be fully Divine as the infinite God.

- 3 While it is true that in the incarnation, Christ did not seek to grasp (αρπαζω—*harpazo*) at equality with God, this does not in any way contradict the fact that Christ, **in His Divine nature**, is equal to God the Father. An examination of the context of Philippians 2:6 reveals that Paul is exhorting Christians to humbly give their lives in sacrifice for the brethren. It is in this **context of humility** that Paul uses the example of Christ who, although existing eternally in God’s nature, laid aside the equality which He possesses with the Father in order to give His life for us. **If Christ did not possess this equality with the Father prior to the incarnation, the whole example would be destroyed. Not trying to exalt oneself and become equal with God is hardly a vivid example of humility.**

3 WAYS JESUS “MADE HIMSELF NOTHING”:

- 1. **HE CONCEALED HIS PREINCARNATE GLORY:** Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:12-18
- 2. **SUBMITTING TO THE LIMITATIONS OF HUMAN WEAKNESS, HE VOLUNTARILLY CHOSE NOT TO USE HIS DIVINE QUALITIES ON CERTAIN OCCASIONS.**

DIVINE QUALITIES	HUMAN QUALITIES
OMNIPOTENCE: Mark 2:7-12; 14:62-64; Jn. 2:7-11	HUNGER & WEARINESS: Lk 4:2; Jn 4:6; Mt 8:24
OMNIPRESENCE: John 1:48; Matt. 18:20; 28:20	FINITE PHYSICAL BODY: Mark 3:9; John 11:32
OMNISCIENCE: John 2:24-25; 6:64; 16:30	LIMITED KNOWLEDGE: Mark 13:32; John 11:34

- 3 **“BEING MADE IN HUMAN LIKENESS”:** **HE TOOK ON AN ADDITIONAL NATURE = THE NATURE OF A MAN:** Prior to the incarnation Jesus was one in person and one in nature; but at the incarnation, Jesus took on an additional nature and thus became a full man while He still retained His full Deity as God. **Although, on certain occasions, attributes of His Divine nature are applied to His human person (John 16:30), His natures are not mixed.** He is not half God and half man, but is two in nature while yet remaining one person. It is for this reason that we see in Scripture certain occasions where Jesus (while operating under the limitations of His human nature) was unable to foretell the future (Mark 13:32), while on other occasions, He (demonstrating His Divine attribute of omniscience) was able to foretell the future (John 6:64).

“But we do see Him who has been made **for a little while** lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God **He might taste death for everyone**....Since then the children share in flesh and blood, **He Himself likewise also partook of the same**, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. For assuredly He does not give

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help to angels, but **He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things...**to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”
—Hebrews 2:9, 14-17

JEHOVAH GOD	JESUS CHRIST
ISAIAH 45:23: “...that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.”	PHILLIPIANS 2:10-11: “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow....and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord....”

JOHN 8:58: “I Am”

“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I am.**’ ”

—*New American Standard Bible*

“Jesus said to them: ‘Most truly I say to you, Before Abraham came into existence, **I have been.**’ ”

—*New World Translation*

“...in NW the latter part of John 8:58 reads: ‘Before Abraham came into existence, **I have been....**’ Which rendering agrees with the context? The question of the Jews (verse 57) to which Jesus was replying had to do with age, not identity. **Jesus’ reply logically dealt with his age, the length of his existence.**” —*Reasoning*, pp. 417-418

“Thus, the real thought of the Greek used here is that...**Jesus had existed long before Abraham was born.**” —*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 26

“I have been (εγω ειμι, *e-go’ ei-mi*). The action expressed by this verb began in the past, is still in progress, and is properly translated by the **perfect** indicative....attempting to identify Jesus with Jehovah, some try to use Exodus 3:14 (*LXX*) which reads: ‘Εγω ειμι ο ων (*E-go’ ei-mi ho on*), which means ‘I am The Being,’ or, ‘I am The Existing One.’ This attempt cannot be sustained because the expression in Exodus 3:14 is **different** from the expression in John 8:58.” —*The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*, 1985 pp. 451, 1145-1146

3 REASONS THE SOCIETY’S TRANSLATION OF JOHN 8:58 IS INCORRECT:

1. The present infinitive “to be” (ειναι—*einai*) is a derivative of the present tense verb ειμι (*eimi*) which literally means “I am.” **If Jesus had wanted to say “I was” or “I have been”** (as the Watchtower Society asserts), He would have had to use the **imperfect tense ημην (*ēmēn*)**, not the **present tense ἐγὼ εἰμί (*egō eimi*)**.

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2. Contrary to the Society’s claims, the Greek phrase $\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\nu$ (*ho ohn*), which is employed in the *LXX* (Septuagint) translation of Exodus 3:14, is actually a **present participle**, and while *eimi* is **present indicative**, both are present tense forms of the same infinitive “to be” (*einai*) and both indicate timeless existence.⁵ The Jews who lived at the time of Christ were well familiar with the Greek Septuagint, and as a result, clearly saw the connection (Leviticus 24:16), for they tried to stone Jesus for blasphemy (verse 59). **The Jews had no laws commanding the stoning of people who merely thought of themselves as being angels!!** Indeed, Jesus in His Divine nature has “neither beginning of days nor end of life” (Hebrews 7:3) for He has always existed as God throughout all eternity.
3. *The New World Translation* correctly translates *ego eimi* as “I am” in **nearly every place** throughout the New Testament **except** where it appears in John 8:58.⁶ Why the inconsistency in translation? The translation of the present tense *ego eimi* as “I am” in this context indicates a continuous existence, without beginning and without end, and therefore contradicts the Society’s claims that Jesus is a created being—the archangel Michael. Thus, in an attempt to make this verse compatible with their doctrine, they chose to translate the present tense *ego eimi* as “I have been,” thereby losing the connection between the Greek Septuagint’s rendering of “I am” in Exodus 3:14 and Jesus’ statement of “I am” in John 8:58. The bias of the Society’s *New World Translation* against the Deity of Jesus Christ is clearly demonstrated when one compares this translation with the Greek-English Kingdom Interlinear translation that is also distributed by the Watchtower Society. Note the following chart:

<i>KINGDOM INTERLINEAR</i>	<i>NEW WORLD TRANSLATION</i>
JOHN 8:58: “Said to them Jesus Amen amen I am saying to you Before Abraham to become I am. ”	JOHN 8:58: “Jesus said to them: ‘Most truly I say to you, Before Abraham came into existence, I have been. ’ ”

JOHN 1:1 “The Word Was God”

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was **God.**”

—*New American Standard*

“In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was **a god.**”

—*New World Translation*

⁵ See *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon*, by Wesley J. Perschbacher, 1990, (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA), pp. 119, 294

⁶ Attempting to provide justification for the *New World Translation*’s rendering of *eimi* as “I have been” at John 8:58, some Jehovah’s Witnesses point to John 14:9 where *eimi* is translated in many Bibles as “Have I been.” In translational cases such as this, it is important to remember the differences between the contexts of the passages being discussed. In this instance, John 8:58 refers to the length of Jesus’ existence (prior to Abraham), whereas John 14:9 does not refer to the length of His existence, but rather, His presence among mortal men. A rendering of *eimi* as “Have I been” in the phrase: “**Have I been** so long with you ...” at John 14:9 in the *New American Standard Bible* means essentially the same as the rendering of: “**Am I** so long a time with you...” in the *Darby Translation*. Since the contexts are completely different and the translational differences between the renderings of John 14:9 do not change the essential meaning of that passage, one cannot use John 14:9 or any other passage where forms of *eimi* are rendered as “was” or “have been” to support the faulty rendering of the *New World Translation* at John 8:58.

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“Note, however, that here again the context lays the groundwork for accurate understanding. Even the *King James Version* says, ‘The Word was *with* God.’ (Italics ours.) **Someone who is ‘with’ another person cannot be the same as that other person....**The Koine Greek language had a definite article (‘the’), but it did not have an indefinite article (‘a’ or ‘an’)...So John 1:1 highlights the quality of the Word, that he was ‘divine,’ ‘godlike,’ ‘**a god,**’ **but not Almighty God.**”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 27

Attempting to disprove the Deity of Christ that is so clearly articulated at John 1:1, the Society setup a straw-man argument based on the preposition “with” found in this passage, and thus, they proceeded to knock that argument down. This type of reasoning serves as a clever way to sidestep the key issue being addressed and to confuse people as to how the doctrine of the Trinity is defined. Since Trinitarians do not believe that God the Father and God the Son are the same person, this argument has no basis in reality. When one defines the doctrine of the Trinity as consisting of three separate and distinct persons who are one God, it is not inconceivable to comprehend how Jesus is “with” God the Father, and yet possesses the same power, authority, and Divine nature that God the Father possesses. At **Isaiah 44:24**, the Society’s *New World Translation* states: “I, Jehovah, am doing everything, stretching out the heavens by myself, laying out the earth. **Who was with me?**” Since no one was “with” Jehovah when He created the earth, Jesus must be Jehovah God!

Likewise, **John 1:3** states: “**All things** came into being by Him, and **apart from Him** nothing came into being that has come into being.” Upon consideration of this passage, the crucial questions that must be asked are: *Which category does Jesus fall under? Is He in the created being category, or the eternal, non-created category?*

THINGS THAT “CAME INTO BEING” (WERE CREATED) THROUGH CHRIST:	THINGS THAT NEVER “CAME INTO BEING” BECAUSE THEY HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED:
All CREATION: UNIVERSE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time: Past, Present, Future• Space: Length, Width, Height• Matter: Energy, Movement, Phenomenon	THE TRIUNE GOD: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• THE FATHER: Psalm 90:2• THE SON: Jn. 8:58; Isa. 9:6; Heb. 7:3• THE HOLY SPIRIT: Hebrews 9:14

Since it is preposterous to assert that Jesus created Himself, the only rational conclusion one can draw is that Jesus must be as eternal as God the Father is. Thus, this passage is one of the clearest passages that demonstrates the eternal and omnipotent nature of the Son. Since Jesus created “all things” and no created thing came into existence “apart from Him,” Jesus certainly cannot be a created creature, as the Society claims, but must reign supreme as the eternal God who is without “beginning of days, nor end of life.” (Hebrews 7:3)

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THE NEW TESTAMENT IN AN IMPROVED VERSION, Upon the Basis of Archbishop Newcome’s New Translation: With a Corrected Text, 1808: “...and the word was a god.”⁷

Concerning the Society’s quoting of this version in support of their claim that Jesus is “a god,” Peter Barnes notes the following:

“The New Testament in an Improved Version, based on Archbishop Newcome’s manuscript was not published until years after Newcome’s death, when his original text came into the possession of the ‘Society for promoting Christian Knowledge and the Practice of Virtue - Unitarian.’ Unitarians are the same as Jehovah’s Witnesses in that they refuse to believe in the deity of Jesus Christ. Those Unitarian publishers produced an ‘edited version’ of Newcomb’s manuscript!”—The Truth About Jesus and the Trinity, 1994, p. 11

THE EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT, interlinear reading, by Benjamin Wilson: “...and a god was the word.”⁸

Just as *The New Testament in an Improved Version* is not without bias, Wilson’s translation has an element of bias due to the fact that Wilson was a Christadelphian. According to the November 8, 1944 Watchtower publication *Consolation*: **“Mr. Wilson was reportedly a Christadelphian. Christadelphians believe the organized churches are apostate, do not believe in the ‘trinity’, do not believe in the ‘inherent immortality of the soul’ or in ‘eternal torment’, but hold that eternal death is the punishment awaiting the wicked.”**⁹ However, despite all of this, Peter Barnes observes:

*“If we look at the Emphatic Diaglott and check Benjamin Wilson’s translation of John 1:1, we will note that in the interlinear section (which shows each Greek word with its corresponding English word underneath), Wilson has written under the Greek word ‘Θεος’ (deity, God), ‘a god,’ but when we examine **Wilson’s finalized translation (his preferred rendering)**, we find that he does not say ‘the word was a god,’ but ‘the Word was God.’ **Therefore his translation does not provide adequate support for the New World Translation.**”—The Truth About Jesus and the Trinity, pp. 11-12*

THE JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE:

Endeavoring to find support for their conclusions from the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, the Society declares:

*“The Journal of Biblical Literature says that expressions ‘with an anarthrous [no article] predicate preceding the verb, are primarily qualitative in meaning.’ As the Journal notes, **this indicates that the lo’gos can be likened to a god.** It also says of John 1:1: ‘The qualitative force of the predicate is so prominent that the noun [the-os] cannot be regarded as definite.’ ”—Should You Believe in the Trinity?, p. 27*

⁷ Quoted in *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 27

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ *Consolation*, November 8, 1944, p. 26

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In the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, the author lists five possible ways John could have written John 1:1. I will list these ways and then quote his statements concerning them. Keep in mind that Clause B is the clause that John used when he wrote John 1:1:

- A. ο λογος ην ο θεος (The Word was the God.)
- B. θεος ην ο λογος (God was the Word.)
- C. ο λογος θεος ην (The Word God was.)
- D. ο λογος ην θεος (The Word was God.)
- E. ο λογος ην θειος (The Word was divine.)

“**Clause A**, with an anarthrous predicate, **would mean that *logos* and *theos* are equivalent and interchangeable**. There would be no *ho theos* which is not also *ho logos*. **But this equation of the two would contradict the preceding clause of 1:1**, in which John writes that ο λογος ην προς τον θεον [The Word was with the God]. This clause suggests relationship, and thus some form of ‘personal’ differentiation, between the two. **Clause D**, with the verb preceding an anarthrous predicate, **would probably mean that the *logos* was ‘a god’ or a divine being of some kind**, belonging to the general category of *theos* but as a distinct being from *ho theos*. **Clause E** would be an attenuated form of **D**. **It would mean that the *logos* was ‘divine,’** without specifying further in what way or to what extent it was divine. It could also imply that the *logos*, being only *theios*, was subordinate to *theos*. **John evidently wished to say something about the *logos* that was other than A and more than D and E**. **Clauses B and C**, with an anarthrous predicate preceding the verb, are primarily qualitative in meaning. **They indicate that the *logos* has the nature of *theos***. There is no basis for regarding the predicated *theos* as definite. **This would make B and C equivalent to A, and like A they would then contradict the preceding clause of 1:1**. As John has just spoken in terms of **relationship and differentiation** between *ho logos* and *ho theos*, **he would imply in B or C that they share the same nature as belonging to the reality *theos***. Clauses B and C are identical in meaning but differ slightly in emphasis. C would mean that the *logos* (rather than something else) had the nature of *theos*. **B means that the *logos* has the nature of *theos*** (rather than something else). **In this clause, the form that John actually uses, the word *theos* is placed at the beginning for emphasis...**Perhaps the clause could be translated, ‘the Word had the same nature as God.’ This would be one way of representing John’s thought, which is, as I understand it, that ***ho logos*, no less than *ho theos*, had the nature of *theos***.”—*Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1973, pp. 85, 87

Note that the *Journal* specifically identifies how John would have had to write John 1:1 if he had wanted to communicate the Watchtower teaching that Jesus is “divine” or “a god.” Then, the *Journal* specifically demonstrates how John did not want to communicate this idea for it states: “John evidently wished to say something about the *logos* [Word] that was **other than A [the God] and more than D and E [‘a god’ or divine]**.” According to the *Journal*, the reason John did not say that the Word was “the God” (as in Clause A) is due to the fact that had John made this

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statement, he would have contradicted the preceding clause (“the Word was **with** God”), and as a result, would have made a statement that would have denied the distinction between the person of the Father and the person of the Son. As can be seen, far from supporting the Watchtower position, the *Journal of Biblical Literature* actually militates against their position for the *Journal* concludes that “*ho logos*, [the Word] no less than *ho theos*, [the God] had the nature of *theos* [God].”

JOSEPH HENRY THAYER:

Endeavoring to find support for their theology from the well-known Greek scholar Joseph Henry Thayer, the Society allegedly quotes Thayer as stating that “The Logos was divine, not the divine Being himself.”¹⁰ A look at the Society’s bibliography for the Trinity brochure lists this quote as coming from “Thayer’s personal copy of Griesbach’s Greek New Testament text, 1809, with Thayer’s handwritten comments on John 1:1 interleaved.” Since I don’t have a way of checking the context or the accuracy of this quote, I cannot substantiate or refute this statement which was supposedly made by Thayer. However, in order to determine whether or not Thayer supports Watchtower ideology, one can look at other statements Thayer has made regarding Christ.

One prime example to consider is Thayer’s comments on Colossians 2:9 which states that “...in Him **all the fulness of Deity** dwells in bodily form.” In his Greek English Lexicon, Thayer notes that the Greek word for Deity (θεοτης—*theotes*) used in this verse means “*deity* i.e. **the state of being God, Godhead**: Col. ii.9.”¹¹ This is certainly not the kind of statement one would expect from a scholar who doesn’t believe in the Deity of Christ. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that Thayer does not support Watchtower ideology. Although it is impossible to do a contextual study of Thayer’s alleged statement concerning the Word, one can assume that if Thayer did make this statement, it may very well have been in the context of the Word not being the same person as the person of God the Father.

DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE, by John L. McKenzie:

The Society quotes John L. McKenzie as stating that “Jn 1:1 should rigorously be translated... ‘the word was a divine being.’”¹² Let’s look at the context from which this statement was taken:

“In the words of Jesus and in much of the rest of the NT the God of Israel (Gk *ho theos*) is the Father of Jesus Christ. **It is for this reason that the title *ho theos*, which now designates the Father as a personal reality, is not applied in the NT to Jesus Himself; Jesus is the Son of God (of *ho theos*). This is a matter of usage and not of rule, and the noun is applied to Jesus a few times. Jn 1:1 should rigorously be translated ‘the word was with the God [= the Father], and the word was a divine being.’ Thomas invokes Jesus with the titles which belong to the Father, ‘My Lord and my God’ (Jn 20:28). ‘The glory of our great God and Savior’ which is to appear can be the glory of no other than Jesus (Tt 2:13).”—*Dictionary of the Bible*, 1965, p. 317**

¹⁰ *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 28

¹¹ *The New Thayer’s Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1974, p. 288

¹² *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 28

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Here again is another example of how the Watchtower has twisted a statement made by a scholar attempting to make it appear that the particular scholar supports their doctrine. Just like the other scholars previously discussed, McKenzie believes that the Word is “divine” in the same sense that the Father is divine and that the reason the title of “the God” is applied to Christ only a few times in Scripture is due to the fact that the biblical writers recognized the distinction between the person of the Father and the person of the Son. However, McKenzie is quick to point out that these writers invoked “Jesus with the titles which belong to the Father”, and therefore proves that Jesus is just as much God as the Father is God.

Violating a Rule?

“SOME claim, however, that such renderings violate a **rule of Koine Greek grammar published by Greek scholar E. C. Colwell back in 1933**. He asserted that in Greek a predicate noun ‘**has the [definite] article when it follows the verb; it does not have the [definite] article when it precedes the verb.**’ By this he meant that a predicate noun preceding the verb should be understood as though it did have the definite article (‘the’) in front of it. At John 1:1 the second noun (*the-os*’), the predicate, precedes the verb—‘and [*the-os*] was the Word.’ So, Colwell claimed, John 1:1 should read ‘and [the] God was the Word.’...**Does the context require an indefinite article at John 1:1? Yes, for the testimony of the entire Bible is that Jesus is not Almighty God...**it is apparent from the **many translations** that insert the indefinite article ‘a’ at John 1:1 and in other places that **many scholars** disagree with such an artificial rule, and so does God’s Word.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 28

The Society’s bias against the Deity of Christ is plainly seen in this Watchtower argument against Colwell’s Greek grammar rule. As has already been discussed, when one considers the testimony of Scripture with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity, literally hundreds of passages can be cited from which the concept of the Trinity is derived. Although the Society has repeatedly sought scholarly support for their doctrines, such support has been difficult for the Society to obtain; and thus, the Society has resorted to misrepresenting what these scholars have written. One prime example of this occurs in the 1969 edition of the Society’s *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*, pp. 1158-1159, in which they misquote Dr. Julius Robert Mantey’s *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* to try to elicit support for their rendering of John 1:1. In response to the Society’s misquoting of him, Dr. Mantey¹³ called the Society’s *New World Translation* a “grossly misleading translation.” The following is an excerpt taken from the statement Mantey wrote in response to the Society’s translation:

“Since my name is used and our Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament is quoted on page 744 to seek to justify their translation I am making this statement. The translation suggested in our Grammar for the disputed passage is, ‘the Word was deity.’ Moffatt’s

¹³ Dr. Mantey is a professor of Greek and New Testament at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary of Chicago, Illinois.

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rendering is ‘the Word was divine.’ William’s translation is, ‘the Word was God Himself.’ Each translation reflects the dominant idea in the Greek. For, whenever an article does not precede a noun in Greek, that noun can either be considered as emphasizing the character, nature, essence or quality of a person or thing, as theos (God) does in John 1:1, or it can be translated in certain contexts as indefinite, as they have done. **But of all the scholars in the world, as far as we know, none have translated this verse as Jehovah’s Witnesses have....** And, if we contrast with that the belittling implication that Christ was only a **god**, do we not at once detect the discord? **Does not such a conception conflict with the New Testament message both in whole and in part?**—“A Grossly Misleading Translation,” pp. 1-2

As is clearly evident, the scholarly community does not endorse the assertions of the Watchtower Society of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

4 REASONS THE SOCIETY’S TRANSLATION OF JOHN 1:1 IS UNTENABLE:

- 1. IS SATAN JEHOVAH? HE IS CALLED “THE GOD” AT 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4:** “among whom **the god** of this system of things has blinded the minds of the unbelievers....”—*New World Translation* Doesn’t this passage undermine the Society’s rule concerning the definite article (the) being used to designate the true God from lesser “gods”?
- 2. JEHOVAH IS ALSO CALLED “A GOD” AT LUKE 20:37-38:** “...when he calls Jehovah ‘the God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Jacob.’ He is **a God**, not of the dead, but of the living, for they are all living to him.”—*New World Translation* Since the term “God” is used of Jehovah **without** the definite article, doesn’t this discredit the Society’s claim that Jesus is not the true God because the term “God” is used in reference to Christ **without** the definite article?
- 3. CONSISTENCY IN TRANSLATION:** If one is consistent in applying the Society’s rule of inserting the article “a” whenever the definite article (the) is not written in the Greek, the following verses would read this way:
 - **JOHN 1:6:** “There came a man, sent from **a** God....”
 - **JOHN 1:18:** “No man has seen **a** God at any time....”
 - **MATTHEW 5:9:** “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of **a** God.”
- 4. SCRIPTURE CALLS JESUS “THE GOD” WHICH INDICATES HE IS JEHOVAH:**
 - **MATTHEW 1:23:** “Look! The virgin...will give birth to son, and they will call the name of him Immanuel; which is being translated With us **the God**.”—*Kingdom Interlinear Translation*
 - **JOHN 20:28:** “Answered Thomas and he said to him The Lord of me and **the God** of me!”—*Kingdom Interlinear Translation*
 - **JOHN 1:18:** “No man has seen God at any time; **the** only begotten **God**, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.”
 - **1 JOHN 5:20; 1:2:** “...we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is **the true God** and eternal life....the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us....”

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2 PETER 1:4: “For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of *the Divine* [θεϊα—*theias*] **nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”

This verse is not implying that Christians will become “little gods” or that their human natures will turn into “divine natures.” Rather, it is teaching that when the Holy Spirit regenerates a person, the Holy Spirit actually dwells within that person (1 Corinthians 3:16), and it is in this sense that the person becomes a partaker of the “divine nature.” Jesus, in contrast to men and angels, **is Divine** and is therefore **God** (*theos*). Jehovah God declares:

“Remember the first things of a long time ago, that **I am the Divine One** and there is **no other God**, nor anyone **like me**.”—**Isaiah 46:9**, *New World Translation*

One more fact worth noting at John 1:1 is that Jehovah’s Witnesses often point to the fact that in their Greek text found in the Watchtower produced *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*, the word “*Theon*” for God the Father is capitalized while the term “*theos*” for Christ is not. This, however, does not affect the veracity of the text nor does it support their theology, for the original Greek manuscripts were uncial manuscripts and thus were written in all capital letters. The Watchtower even notes this fact in their 1962 publication, “*The Word*” *Who is He? According to John*, p. 54

Must Harmonize with the Bible

“But does not ‘**Mighty God**’ with its capital letters indicate that Jesus is in some way equal to Jehovah God? Not at all...Still, even though Jesus was called ‘Mighty,’ **there can be only one who is ‘Almighty’**....Since the Bible calls humans, angels, even Satan, ‘**gods**,’ or powerful ones, the superior Jesus in heaven can properly be called ‘a god’...But what about the apostle Thomas’ saying, ‘My Lord and my God!’ to Jesus **at John 20:28**? To Thomas, Jesus was like ‘a god,’...Thomas may **simply have made an emotional exclamation of astonishment**, spoken to Jesus but directed to God.”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, pp. 28-29

ARE THERE TWO “MIGHTY GODS”?

ISAIAH 10:20-21; JEREMIAH 32:17-18	ISAIAH 9:6
“...but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty GodNothing is too difficult for Thee...O great and mighty God . The LORD of hosts is His name;”	“For a child will be born to us...And His name will be called... Mighty God”

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The real issue here is not whether or not other beings are called “gods,” but which category of “god” does Jesus fall under? Does He fall under the category of being true God or false god? While Jehovah’s Witnesses assert that there is a category of “gods” that is neither true or false but that these “gods” hold the title of “god” due to their power and authority, Scripture reveals that this is not the case. For example, at **Psalm 82:6-7**, Israelite judges were called “gods” in sarcasm because these judges (who thought of themselves a “gods”) were reviling the true God by their unrighteous judgments. Psalm 82 is a psalm of condemnation of these judges who acted as if they were “gods” in that they made life and death decisions for others, but who would ultimately “die like men”—thus proving the infinite difference between the true God and the mightiest of mortals.

At **2 Corinthians 4:4**, Satan is addressed as “god.” Since it is obvious that Satan is a false god, he is addressed as “god” because people who do not honor the true God serve him just as the pagans throughout history serve false idol “gods” made of wood and stone. Since there is only one true God (John 17:3) as He has revealed Himself as the “only God” (1 Timothy 1:17), Jesus is either in the true God category and is therefore Jehovah God, or He is a counterfeit god who is a false god. There is no middle ground. While Scripture reveals that all other “so-called gods” are not gods **by nature** but are false gods (1 Corinthians 8:5-6), **Jesus is by nature the one and only true God.**

“However at that time, when you **did not know God**, you were slaves to those which **by nature** are no gods....Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in **very nature God**....we are in Him who is true, in His Son **Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life**....the **eternal life**, which was with the Father and was manifested to us....And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, **Jesus Christ** might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, **the only God**, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen....For I am God, and there is **no other**; *I am* God, and there is **no one like Me.**”
—Galatians 4:8; Philippians 2:5-6¹⁴; 1 John 5:20; 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:16-17; Isaiah 46:9

By teaching that there are many “gods” who are neither true or false, Watchtower doctrine resembles henotheism rather than monotheism or polytheism. While henotheism is very similar to polytheism in that it advocates the existence of many “gods,” it differs from polytheism by teaching that there is only one God who should receive worship. As is clearly demonstrated by Scripture, neither henotheism or polytheism is correct, for Jehovah God is the “only God” (1 Timothy 1:17).

WHO IS THE “FIRST AND LAST”?

JEHOVAH GOD	JESUS CHRIST
ISAIAH 43:10-11; 44:6; 48:12: “‘You are My witnesses,’ declares the LORD... ‘Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me. I, even I, am the LORD; and there is no savior beside	REVELATION 1:17-18; 2:8: “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last , and the living One; and I was

¹⁴ This verse is quoted from the *New International Version*

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Me... I am the first and I am the last , and there is no God besides Me...Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last. ”	dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.’...The first and the last , who was dead, and has come to life, says this....”
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WHO IS THE ROCK?

JEHOVAH GOD	JESUS CHRIST
ISAIAH 44:6-8: “Thus says the LORD...’ I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me. And who is like Me?...Is there any God besides Me, or is there any other Rock? I know of none. ’ ”	1 CORINTHIANS 10:4: “...and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. ”
ISAIAH 8:12-14: “...And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of <i>it</i> . It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy . And He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread. Then He shall become a sanctuary; But to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over.... ”	1 PETER 3:14-15; 2:4, 6-8: “...And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, but sanctify Christ as Lord....And coming to Him as to a living stone , rejected by men...For <i>this</i> is contained in Scripture: ‘Behold I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner <i>stone</i> , and he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed.’ This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, ‘The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner <i>stone</i> ,’ and, ‘ A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense ’;”

In chapters two and three of First Peter, Peter quotes Isaiah 8:12-14 which speaks exclusively of Jehovah God and applies this passage directly to Christ. Regarding the Watchtower Society’s insertion of the Divine Name (Jehovah) into the texts of their Christian Greek Scriptures (New Testament), the Society’s Greek-English Translation states:

“In the *LXX* the Greek words *Ky’ri-os* and *The-os*’ [Lord and God] have been used to crowd out the distinctive name of the Supreme Deity. Every comprehensive Greek-English dictionary states that these two Greek words have been used as equivalents of the divine name [Jehovah]. Hence, the modern translator is warranted in **using the divine name Jehovah as an equivalent of those two Greek words, that is, at places where the writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures quote verses, passages, and expressions from the Hebrew Scriptures or from the *LXX* where the divine name occurs....**How many modern translators determine when to render the Greek words *Ky’ri-os* and *The-os*’ as the divine name? **By determining where the inspired Christian writers have quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures.** Then they must refer back to the Hebrew text to locate **whether the divine name appears there.** In this way they can determine

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the identity to be given to *Ky’ri-os* and *The-os*, and make appropriate use of the personal name.”
—*The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*, 1985, pp. 11-12

I Peter 3:15 states that we are to “sanctify Christ as Lord...” According to *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, the word “sanctify” means “to set apart as holy.” Thus, Peter (quoting Isaiah 8:13 which speaks of regarding Jehovah as holy) literally states that we are to “sanctify” (regard as holy) “Christ as Lord.” If we apply the Society’s rule of inserting the name “Jehovah” into the text of any New Testament passage which is quoting a Hebrew passage where the divine name (Jehovah or YHWH) appears, we could literally translate 1 Peter 3:15 as “...sanctify Christ as Jehovah...”, for the divine name appears in Isaiah 8:13! At 1 Peter 2:4-8, Peter also quotes Isaiah 8:14 which states that Jehovah God is the stumbling stone of Israel and reveals that this Jehovah God who is the “stone of stumbling” is Jesus Christ. Thus, Jesus is Jehovah God!

JESUS IS ALMIGHTY!

REVELATION 1:8; 22:13	REVELATION 1:17-18
“ ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega ,’ says the Lord God, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty ...I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. ’ ”	“Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore , and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”

- **MATTHEW 28:18:** “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘**All authority** has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’ ”¹⁵
- **HEBREWS 1:3:** “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.**”¹⁶
- **MARK 2:7-12:** “ ‘Why does this man speak that way? **He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?**’ And immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, ‘Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?...But in order that **you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**’—He said to the paralytic—‘I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home.’ And he rose and immediately took up the pallet and went out in the sight of all; so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, ‘We have never seen anything like this.’ ”

PSALM 89:6-9	MATTHEW 8:24-27
“ For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD, a God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, and	“And behold, there arose a great storm in the sea , so that the boat was covered with the waves; but He himself was asleep. And they came to <i>Him</i> , and awoke Him, saying,

¹⁵ See also John 16:15

¹⁶ See also Colossians 1:17

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awesome above all those who are around Him? O Lord God of hosts, **who is like Thee**, O mighty LORD? Thy faithfulness also surrounds Thee. **Thou dost rule the swelling of the sea; When its waves rise, Thou dost still them.**”

‘Save *us*, Lord; we are perishing!’ And He said to them, ‘Why are you timid, you men of little faith?’ **Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm.** And the men marveled, saying, ‘**What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?**’ ”

JESUS IS JEHOVAH GOD!

At **John 20:28**, Thomas addressed Jesus as “My Lord and my God!” If Thomas was merely making “an emotional exclamation of astonishment” by addressing Jesus as God, wouldn’t this have been equivalent to taking the name of Jehovah in vain? If Jesus is not God, wouldn’t this exclamation require a rebuke on the part of Christ? Instead of correcting Thomas, however, at verse 29, we read that Jesus commended Thomas for believing in Him! Psalm 35:23 calls Jehovah (Yahweh) “my God and my Lord.” It may be that Thomas, who was quite familiar with the Old Testament, had this verse in mind when he addressed Jesus as “My Lord and my God.”

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of **God** which He purchased **with His own blood.**”—Acts 20:28

“For it was the *Father’s* good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in Him...For in Him all the **fulness of Deity** dwells in bodily form.”—Colossians 1:19; 2:9

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CHAPTER 8: “WORSHIP GOD ON HIS TERMS”

“Therefore, if we want God’s approval, we need to ask ourselves: What does *God* say about himself? **How does *he* want to be worshiped?** What are *his* purposes, and how should we fit in with them? An **accurate knowledge** of the truth gives us the right answers to such questions. **Then we can worship God on his terms.**”—*Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, p. 30

Another way Jesus indicated that He is God is by not rejecting worship that was rendered to Him. At **Revelation 22:8-9** we read of an incident where John “fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. **And he said to me, ‘Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book; worship God.’**” If Jesus is merely a created being such as an angel, He would have rejected worship. (Exodus 34:14)

- **JOHN 5:23:** “in order that **all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.** He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.”
- **HEBREWS 1:6:** “And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, ‘**And let all the angels of God worship Him.**’”¹

At **Hebrews 1:6**, we read that angels are commanded to worship Christ. If Jesus is an angel, this would have amounted to nothing less than creature worship. Endeavoring to avoid the obvious condemnatory implication of this passage with the Watchtower teaching that Jesus is the archangel Michael, the Society cleverly distorted this passage in their *New World Translation*. At Hebrews 1:6 and many other passages where Jesus is said to receive “worship,”² the current edition of the *New World Translation* renders προσκυνεω—*proskuneo* (the Greek word for “worship”) as “do obeisance to.” The Society argues that “obeisance” is not worship but is merely respectful honor which is rendered to Christ because of his position as Jehovah God’s representative. Is this a tenable argument? At **Acts 10:25-26** in the *New World Translation*, we read of a incident where Peter rejected “obeisance” because he realized that it should be given only to God. Since Peter would not even accept “obeisance,” Jesus cannot be a created being, for He receives the same “worship” and “obeisance” that Jehovah God receives.

THE FATHER RECEIVES WORSHIP	THE LAMB RECEIVES WORSHIP
REVELATION 4:10-11: “the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him ”	REVELATION 5:11-14: “And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels ”

¹ Like many other Watchtower doctrines, the Society’s position on this important doctrine has also changed over the years. Originally they taught that Christ should receive worship. This teaching was reflected in the editions of the *New World Translation* prior to 1971. Since 1971, however, the Society no longer renders *proskuneo* as “worship” when it is used of Christ. The only exception to this is found at Revelation 5:14 where the *New World Translation* describes an incident in which both Jesus and the Father receive “worship.”

² See Matthew 2:11; 14:33; 28:9, 17; John 9:38

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<p>who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, ‘Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.’ ”</p>	<p>around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.’ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, ‘To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.’ And the four living creatures kept saying, ‘Amen.’ And the elders fell down and worshiped.”</p>
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Since prayer is a form of worship, Jesus demonstrates that He is God by the fact that He not only accepts prayer, but He encourages His followers to pray to Him.

- **JOHN 14:14:** “If you **ask Me** anything in My name, I will do *it*.”³
- **ACTS 7:59:** “And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon *the Lord* and said, ‘**Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!**’ ”
- **2 CORINTHIANS 12:8-9:** “Concerning this **I entreated the Lord three times** that it might depart from me. And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weakness, that the **power of Christ** may dwell in me.”
- **ACTS 22:16:** “And now why do you delay? ‘Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, **calling upon His name.**’ ”
- **1 CORINTHIANS 1:2, 9:** “...to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place **call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**, their *Lord* and ours....you were called into **fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**”

Not only did the martyr Steven call out to Jesus in prayer (Acts 7:59), but at 1 Corinthians 1:2, 9, Paul admonishes believers to not only “call upon” the name of Jesus in prayer, but to have “fellowship” with Him. If prayer should not be addressed to Jesus, as the Watchtower Society asserts,⁴ how can a person have “fellowship” with Christ? How can a person have “fellowship”

³ Note there is a textual variance in the manuscripts of this passage. Some manuscripts do not have the “me” in this passage (like the KJV and NKJV bibles), however the **oldest** and **best** Greek manuscripts that we have available today (including Papyrus 66 – the oldest manuscript of the book of John at about 125C.E. and the Society’s manuscript of the Westcott and Hort manuscripts—Codex Siniaticus and Vaticanus) contain the “me.”

⁴ *Insight on the Scriptures*, vol. 2, 1998, p. 667

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with someone he never talks to? At John 14:14, Jesus encourages His disciples to call upon Him in prayer. In order to make this verse compatible with Watchtower doctrine, the Society cleverly left out the “Me” in their *New World Translation*. The deception of the Society’s *New World Translation* is readily seen when one compares this passage with the Society’s Greek-English interlinear translation.

<i>KINGDOM INTERLINEAR</i>	<i>NEW WORLD TRANSLATION</i>
JOHN 14:14: “If ever anything you should ask me in the name of me this I shall do.”	JOHN 14:14: “If You ask anything in my name, I will do it.”
“...do not mention the name of other gods , nor let <i>them</i> be heard from your mouth.” —Exodus 23:13	

WHO ARE WE TO SERVE?

2 KINGS 17:35	COLOSSIANS 3:24
“with whom the LORD made a covenant and commanded them, saying, ‘You shall not fear other gods, nor bow down yourselves to them nor serve them nor sacrifice to them.’ ”	“knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. ”

IS JESUS CHRIST THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL?

Although not directly stated in the Watchtower Society’s brochure on the Trinity, the Society officially teaches that Jesus Christ is the archangel Michael. Asserting that Jesus existed as Michael prior to coming to earth and that Jesus was “no more, no less” than a perfect man when He was on earth, they claim that at His death, the “man” Jesus ceased to exist,⁵ being raised as a “spirit creature”—the archangel Michael.⁶ Endeavoring to prove that Jesus is Michael, Jehovah’s Witnesses often point to passages like **Daniel 10:13** where Michael is seen as “one of the chief princes.” The fact that Michael is “one of the chief princes,” however, indicates that Michael is not unique. Jesus is more than just a prince or ruler. The Bible calls Jesus “King of Kings” and “Lord of Lords.” (Revelation 17:14; 19:16) This title indicates absolute sovereignty and authority and is a far cry from being “one of the chief princes” who is one among a group of equals.

Daniel 10:5-9 describes the person who is speaking to Daniel as “a certain man dressed in linen.” Although it is not specifically stated in the text, when the description of this “man” in linen is compared with the description of Jesus Christ at **Revelation 1:13-18**, one could conclude

⁵ *The Atonement Between God and Man, Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 5, p. 454

⁶ See *Reasoning from the Scriptures*, p. 218

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that Jesus Christ is the “man” in linen who is speaking to Daniel in this passage. Verses 12-13 states that the man in linen (who may be Jesus Christ) describes how “Michael one of the foremost princes came to help” Him. Thus, one could ask the question that if Michael the archangel helped Jesus, how can Jesus be Michael?

DANIEL 10:5-6, 8-10, 12-13	REVELATION 1:13-18
<p>“I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult...no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength. But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground. Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees....Then he said to me, ‘Do not be afraid...I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me....’ ”</p>	<p>“and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet <i>were</i> like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.’ ”</p>

1 Thessalonians 4:16 states, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, **with the voice of the archangel**, and with the trumpet of God....” Jehovah’s Witnesses use this verse to try to prove that Jesus is Michael the archangel because He comes “with the voice of the archangel.” However, the fact that Jesus is coming with the archangel’s voice doesn’t mean that He is an archangel. Notice that this verse also says that Jesus is coming with God’s trumpet, but one wouldn’t argue that Jesus is God simply because He is coming with God’s trumpet.

In **2 Thessalonians 1:7**, we read that “the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire....” Thus, it appears that Jesus will come with the archangel who issues the shout. In **Zechariah 14:5-6**, we read that Jehovah God “will come, *and* all the holy ones with Him! And it will come about in that day that there will be no light.” When one compares this passage of Jehovah’s coming with the coming of Christ as described in

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2 Thessalonians 1:7 and Matthew 24:29-31, it is obvious that the Jehovah who is coming in Zechariah is the Jesus who is coming with “His angels” in Matthew 24 and 2 Thessalonians.

JEHOVAH IS COMING	CHRIST IS COMING
<p><u>ZECHARIAH 14:3-6:</u> “Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives....Then the LORD, my God, will come and all the holy ones with Him! And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.”</p>	<p><u>MATTHEW 24:3, 29-31:</u> “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and what <i>will be</i> the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’ ...’But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet....’”</p>
<p><u>ISAIAH 60:19-20:</u> “No longer will you have the sun for light by day, Nor for brightness will the moon give you light; But you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, And your God for your glory. Your sun will set no more, Neither will your moon wane; For you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, And the days of your mourning will be finished.”</p>	<p><u>REVELATION 21:23, 25:</u> “And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb....And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there)....”</p>
<p><u>REVELATION 1:7-8:</u> “Look! He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, and those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief because of him. Yes, Amen. ‘I am the Al’pha and the O-me’ga,’ says Jehovah God, ‘the One who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty.’”—<i>New World Translation</i></p>	<p><u>REVELATION 22:12-13, 20:</u> “ ‘Look! I am coming quickly, and the reward I give is with me, to render to each one as his work is. I am the Al’pha and the O-me’ga, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.’...He that bears witness of these things says, ‘Yes; I am coming quickly.’ ‘Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.’”—<i>New World Translation</i></p>

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In order to try to prove that when Jesus was claiming to be the “Son of God,” He was claiming to be one of God’s angels, Jehovah’s Witnesses point to **Job 38:7** where angels are called sons of God. However, **Hebrews 1:5** states, “For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee’? And again, ‘I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me’?” Since the Bible doesn’t contradict itself, it is obvious that Jesus is called the “Son of God” in a different sense than angels are called God’s sons. Indeed, Jesus was never Michael the archangel before He came to earth, nor did He raise as “a spirit creature”—the archangel Michael. The Bible testifies: “For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking.”—Hebrews 2:5

TITLES AND ATTRIBUTES OF JEHOVAH APPLIED TO JESUS

- Jehovah **knows “all things.”** (1 John 3:20; Psalm 147:5) Jesus knows “all things.” (John 16:30)
- Jehovah is the **only one who knows the hearts of all men.** (1 Kings 8:39; Jeremiah 17:9-10) Jesus knows the hearts of all men. (John 2:24-25; Rev. 2:18, 23)
- Jehovah is our **sanctifier.** (Exodus 31:13) Jesus sanctifies us. (Hebrews 10:10)
- Jehovah is our **peace.** (Judges 6:23) Jesus is our peace. (Ephesians 2:14)
- Jehovah is our **righteousness.** (Jeremiah 23:6) Jesus is our righteousness. (1 Corinthians 1:30)
- Jehovah is our **healer.** (Exodus 15:26) Jesus heals us. (Acts 9:34)
- Jehovah God **dwells** in us. (2 Cor. 6:16) Jesus is in us. (Romans 8:10)⁷
- Jehovah is the **giver of life** who will not allow His people to be “**snatched**” out of **His hand.** (Deuteronomy 32:39) Jesus is the giver of life who will not allow His people to be “snatched” out of His hands. (John 10:28)
- Jehovah’s voice is “like the roar of **rushing waters.**” (Ezekiel 43:2) Jesus’ “voice was like the sound of rushing waters.” (Revelation 1:15)
- Jehovah is **present everywhere.** (Proverbs 15:3; Jeremiah 23:24; 1 Kings 8:27) Jesus is omnipresent. (John 1:48; Matthew 18:20; 28:20)
- Jehovah’s **nature does not change.** (Malachi 3:6) Jesus’ nature does not change. (Hebrews 13:8)
- Jehovah is the **only** God we are to “**serve.**” (2 Kings 17:35) Jesus is to be served. (Col. 3:24)
- Jehovah is the **only** God to be “**worshipped.**” (Exodus 34:14) Jesus receives the same honor and “worship” that the Father receives. (John 5:23; Revelation 5:11-14 c.f. Revelation 4:10-11)⁸ No angel can receive “worship.” (Revelation 22:8-9)

TITLES AND ATTRIBUTES OF JEHOVAH APPLIED TO JESUS

⁷ Every place where Jesus is said to dwell “in” someone, the Watchtower Society’s *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* mistranslates it to read “Christ is **in union** with you.” However, note that the correct translation of “in you” can be found in Romans 8:10 of the Society’s Greek-English text, *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*.

⁸ Also Compare Isaiah 45:23 with Philippians 2:10-11.

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- Jehovah the Lord is to be **set apart as holy**. (Isaiah 8:12b-13) Jesus as Jehovah is to be set apart as holy. (1 Peter 3:14b-15a)⁹
- Jehovah’s **glory** is not to be given to another. (Isaiah 42:8) Jesus shares Jehovah’s glory. (John 17:5)
- **God’s name** is Jehovah (or Yahweh). (Isaiah 42:8) Jesus has Jehovah’s name. (John 17:11; John 16:14-15)
- Jehovah is the **only God** to be mentioned in **prayer**. (Exodus 23:13) Christians are to pray to Jesus. (John 14:14)
- **Calling upon Jehovah** (Joel 2:32) is the same as calling upon Jesus. (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:9-13)¹⁰
- Jehovah “the true God” is called “**eternal life**.” (1 John 5:20) Jesus is called “the eternal life.” (1 John 1:2)
- Jehovah is the “**mighty God**.” (Jeremiah 32:17-18; Isaiah 10:20-21) Jesus is the “mighty God” (Isaiah 9:6) who is “Almighty.” (Revelation 1:7-8)¹¹ **THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD. (1 Timothy 1:17; Isaiah 44:8)**
- Jehovah is an “**everlasting light**.” (Psalm 27:1; Isaiah 60:19-20) Jesus is the light of men and the everlasting light of the future city. (John 1:4-9; Revelation 21:23)
- Jehovah is “**the first and the last**.” (Isaiah 44:6; 48:12) Jesus is the “first and the last.” (Revelation 1:17-18; 22:12-13, 20)
- Jehovah is the “**Alpha and the Omega**.” (Revelation 1:8; Revelation 21:6-7) Jesus is the “Alpha and the Omega.” (Revelation 22:12-13, 20)
- Jehovah’s title is “**the Holy One**.” (Isaiah 47:4) Jesus is “the Holy One.” (Acts 3:14; John 6:69)
- Jehovah is the “**stumbling stone**” of Israel. (Isaiah 8:13-15) Jesus is the “stumbling stone” of Israel. (1 Peter 2:6-8)
- John the Baptist was to **prepare the way** for Jehovah. (Isaiah 40:3) The Jehovah who came was Jesus. (Mk. 1:1-4; John 1:6-7, 23)
- Jehovah is the one who was “**pierced**.” (Zechariah 12:10)¹² Jesus is the pierced Jehovah. (Revelation 1:7-8)
- The Jehovah who was **sold for 30 pieces of silver** (Zechariah 11:13) is Jesus. (Matthew 27:2-6)
- Jehovah is **Lord of the elements**. (Psalm 89:8-9) Jesus is Lord of the elements. (Matthew 8:26-27)
- Jehovah is **Lord of the Sabbath**. (Exodus 20:10) Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath. (Mark 2:28)
- Jehovah is the **great Judge** who gives life to whom he wishes and who renders to each man “according” to his “deeds.” (Psalm 98:9; Deut. 32:39; Jer. 17:9-10) Jesus is the **only judge** who gives life to whom he wishes and renders to each man “according” to his “deeds.” (John 5:21-22; Rev. 2:18, 23)

⁹ Compare the Old Testament Greek Septuagint’s rendering of Isaiah 8:12-13 with 1 Peter 3:14-15. Paul quotes this passage of Jehovah and applies it directly to Jesus.

¹⁰ The *New World Translation* inserts the word “Jehovah” for “Lord” 237 times into their New Testament translation without the support of a single Greek manuscript of the New Testament. This is the case with Acts 2:21 and Romans 10:13. Note, however, the correct translation of “Lord” can be found in the Society’s *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*.

¹¹ The Society translates “Lord God” in Rev. 1:8 as “Jehovah God.” Notice that in this verse, Jehovah the Lord is called “Alpha and Omega.” At Revelation 22:12-13, 20, Jesus is called the “Alpha and Omega,” therefore, Jesus is the “Almighty” God of Rev. 1:8.

¹² While the best Hebrew manuscripts available render Zechariah 12:10 as, “look upon **Me** whom they have pierced,” the *New World Translation* mistranslates it to read, “look to **the One** whom they have pierced.”

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- Jehovah is the **only** one who can **forgive sins**. (Mark 2:7; Daniel 9:9) Jesus forgives sins. (Mark 2:10-11; Luke 24:46-47)
- Jehovah is **the great “shepherd”** who leads his people to “the spring of the **water of life**.” (Psalm 23:1-2; Revelation 21:6-7) Jesus as the “shepherd” of His people, leads them “to springs of the water of life.” (John 10:11-18; Revelation 7:17) **THERE IS ONLY ONE SHEPHERD. (John 10:16)**
- Jehovah is “**Lord of Lords**.” (Deut. 10:17) Jesus is “Lord of Lords.” (Revelation 17:14; 19:16) The Father is **Lord of all**. (Matthew 11:25; Acts 17:24) Jesus is “Lord of all.” (Acts 10:36) **THERE IS ONLY ONE LORD. (Jude 4)**
- Jehovah is **the Savior**. (Isaiah 45:21-22) Jesus is the Savior. (Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1) **THERE IS ONLY ONE SAVIOR. (Isaiah 43:11)**
- Jehovah **created the universe**. (Psalm 102:25-27) Jesus created the universe. (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-19;¹³ Hebrews 1:10-12)¹⁴ **THERE IS ONLY ONE CREATOR. (Isaiah 44:24)**
- **Isaiah saw Jehovah**. (Isaiah 6:1-5) The Jehovah that Isaiah saw was Jesus. (John 12:41)

¹³ In this passage of Colossians, the *New World Translation*, adds the word “other” four times against all Greek manuscripts available. Note the correct translation of this passage can be found in the Society’s *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*.

¹⁴ At Hebrews 1:10-12, Paul quotes Psalm 102:25-27 which speaks of Jehovah and applies this passage directly to Christ.

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Could it be that Jehovah gave Jesus all these qualities, and therefore, Jesus is a “lesser God” under Jehovah? No! For Jehovah declares:

“For I am God, and there is **no other**; I *am* God, and there is **no one like Me.**”

—Isaiah 46:9

DISHONORING GOD

“Be very careful to be accurate in all statement you make. Use evidence honestly. In quotations, **do not twist the meaning of a writer or speaker or use only partial quotations to give a different thought than the person intended...**Avoid the pitfalls of improper argumentation....When you make references to the Scriptures or **to any other authority, be definite. And use reliable, capable authority...**Quoting from official publications of an organization to show what they believe is good. **Also one wants to use evidence from an authority that the hearers will accept.**”—*Qualified to Be Ministers*, 1955, Watchtower Bible And Tract Society, p. 199

“We should want to speak the truth and be **absolutely accurate in every detail** at all times. This should be so not only as regards doctrine but also **in our quotations, what we say about others or how we represent them...**Wrong statements delivered to an audience may be repeated and the error magnified. **Inaccuracies** that are recognized by an audience **raise questions as to the authority of the speaker on other points, perhaps even calling in question the truth of the message itself.**”—*Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook*, 1992, p. 110

“Knowing these things, what will you do? It is obvious that the true God, who is himself ‘the God of truth’ and who hates lies, will not look with favor on **persons who cling to organizations that teach falsehood.** (Psalm 31:5; Proverbs 6:16-19; Revelation 21:8) And, really, **would you want to be even associated with a religion that had not been honest with you?**”—*Is This Life All There Is?*, 1974, Watchtower Bible And Tract Society, p. 46

2 CORINTHIANS 10:17	PHILIPPIANS 3:3
“But he that boasts, let him boast in Jehovah. ”— <i>New World Translation</i>	“For we are those...who are rendering sacred service...and have our boasting in Christ Jesus... ”— <i>New World Translation</i>