

“Tough Questions: The Trinity”

I. Why do we believe so strongly in the Trinity if the word “trinity” is not in the Bible?

II. How do we explain the Trinity using Scripture?

A. Why is a correct understanding of the Trinity important? Don't all paths lead to God?

As long as I sincerely believe “something” won't that be good enough to get me into heaven?

- All paths do ultimately lead to God, but not necessarily to the Father (Jn. 14:6; Mt. 25:31-46).
- **All roads lead to God, but at the end of most roads, people encounter God as a _____ (Rev. 20:12).**
- We are warned about **false prophets** in Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:20-22; Matthew 7:15-23; 24:23-24; Mark 13:5-6, 21-22; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Galatians 1:8-9; Colossians 2:8-9; 2 Thessalonians 2; 1 Tim. 1:3-4 and 4:1-2; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 2:18-23; 4:1-5.
- The Bible teaches us that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah (Luke 2:11; 1 John 2:22); that He is one in nature with the Father (He is God – John 20:28; John 1:1); that He was truly incarnated as man (Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Timothy 2:5); that He rose bodily from the dead (John 2:19; Luke 24:39); that He will return at the end of the age to judge all men (Mt. 24:30-31; Rev. 1:7; 19:11-15; 20:11-15); and that He saved us from our sins on the cross (Acts 4:12; Romans 5:9-11). Denial of any of these essential teachings is a denial of Christ Himself!

B. Definition of “Trinity”

To say that God exists as a Trinity is to say that **there is one God with a unified essence who exists in three equal persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**. By person it is meant that God thinks, feels, acts and speaks. The **Westminster Confession of Faith (1647)** summarizes the doctrine by saying, **“In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.”**

C. Biblical Support for the Trinity

1. **There is only one God (Deut. 6:4-5; Is. 43:10; 45:5-6; Jn. 17:3; 1 Tim. 2:5)**
2. **The Father is God (John 6:27, 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3)**
3. **Jesus, the Son, is God (Matt. 28:9, John 1:1-4, 1:14, 5:17-18, 8:58, 10:30-33, 12:37-41 cf. Isaiah 6:9-11; 20:28-29, Acts 20:28; Romans 9:5; Col. 1:16-17, 2:8-9, Php. 2:10-11, Heb. 1:8; 1 Co. 8:4-6, 1 Tim. 6:15, Titus 2:13; 1 John 5:20; Rev. 1:8, 1:17-18, 17:14, 19:16, 22:13-16)**
4. **The Holy Spirit is God (Micah 3:8; Acts 1:8; Rom. 15:13, 19; Heb. 9:14; Is. 40:13-14; 1 Cor. 2:10; Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:30; 139:7; Acts 5:3-4; Jn. 14:16; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Eph. 4:30; Acts 7:51; Heb. 10:29)**
5. **The Father, Son, and Spirit are different persons (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; 6:23; Phil. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1-2; 1 Tim. 1:1-2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; Phile 3; James 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:2; 2 Jn. 3; Jn. 3:17; 5:31-32; 8:16-18; 11:41-42; 12:28; 14:31; 17:23-26; Gal. 4:4; 1 Jn. 4:10; Lk. 3:22; Jn. 14:16; 15:26; 16:7; 1 Jn. 2:1; Jn. 14:15; 15:26; Rom. 8:11, 26-27; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; Gal. 1:1)**
6. **All three are recorded in Scripture as being together at the same time – not Modalism (Is. 48:16b; Mt. 3:16-17; 28:18-20; Rom. 14:17-18; 15:16; 1 Cor. 2:2-5; 6:11; 12:4-6; 2**

- Cor. 1:21-22; 13:14; Eph. 2:18; 3:16-17; 4:4-6; Col. 1:6-8; 1 Thess. 1:3-5; 2 Thess. 2:13;**
- 7. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all eternal (Dt. 33:27; Micah 5:2; Heb. 9:14)**
 - 8. There is a Plurality in the Godhead (Gen. 1:1, 26; Dt. 6:4-5)**

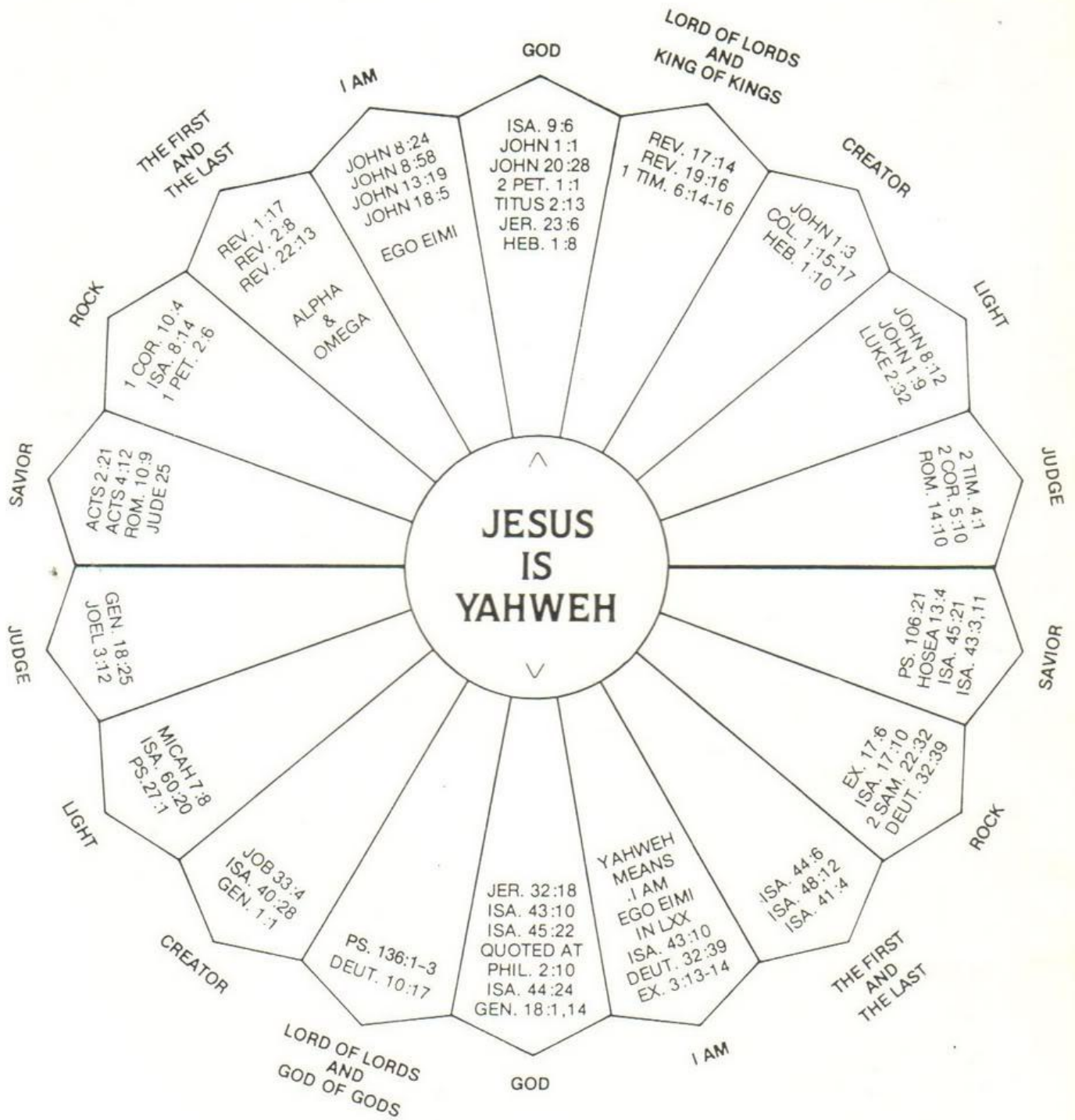
Suggestions for witnessing to people in cults:

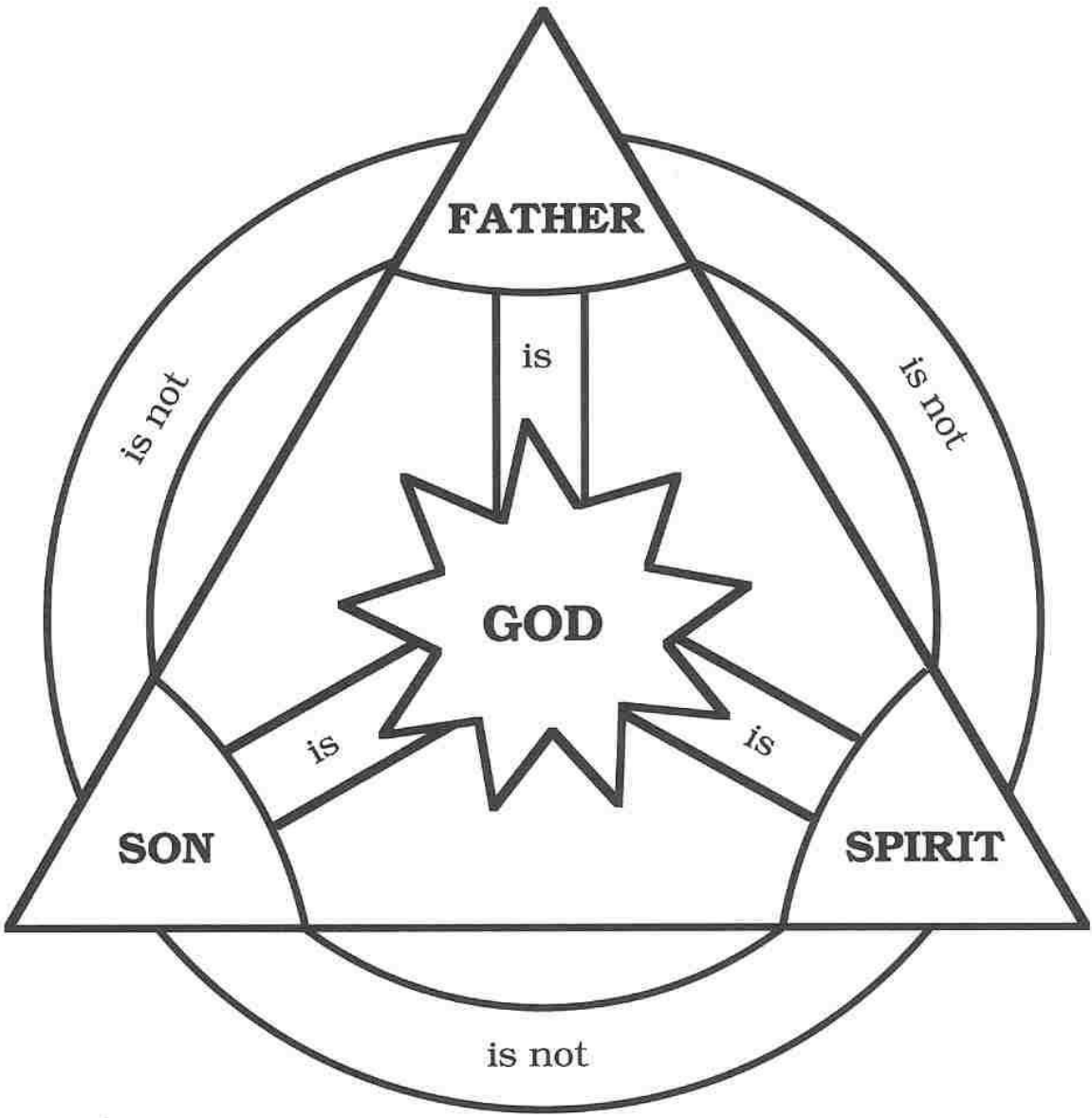
1. Know what you believe! Study the Scriptures. Take a basic doctrines class.
2. Study some of the major things they believe that contradict Scripture. Purchase the pamphlets: "The Spirit of Truth and The Spirit of Error" parts I and II, Moody Press. Read other good books on cults: Walter Martin, "The Kingdom of the Cults" and "The New Cults"; Robert & Gretchen Passantino, "Answers to the Cultist at Your Door"; Anthony Hoekema, "The Four Major Cults"; M. Thomas Starkes, "Confronting Popular Cults"; etc.
3. Be gracious and loving. Speak to them with gentleness and reverence. They are not your enemy! Speak to them of where the "cult" has gone wrong in its teaching (not accusing them but the cult itself).
4. Keep the conversation on the essential issues: the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.
5. Share your personal testimony and your absolute assurance that you have eternal life.
6. If you don't know an answer to one of their questions simply let them know that you will study further and find an answer for them.
7. Pray that the Lord would open their eyes to understand the truth of the Gospel and be saved!

Discussion Questions:

1. What would you say to a person that tells you, "It doesn't matter what you believe about God as long as you are sincere"? What Scripture would you use?
2. Why do you think people join cults? Why do you think the majority of cult members have some background in Christian churches? What could be done in our church to help prevent people from being led astray by cults?
3. In order to recognize counterfeits you need to thoroughly study the real thing. Right now on a scale of 1 to 10 how well do you know the Bible and the major doctrines of the faith? What could you begin doing this week to get a better grasp on the historic Christian faith?
4. How can the evangelism training from "The Way of the Master" (using the 10 Commandments to confront the conscience and show people their need for salvation) help us in witnessing to people in cults?

Jesus is YahWeH:





The following chart was developed by **Bodie Hodge**, *Answers in Genesis*, and provides numerous passages concerning the various attributes and works of each member of the Trinity.

God . . .	The Father	The Son	The Holy Spirit
is the Creator	Gen. 1:1; 2:4; 14:19-22; Dt. 32:6; Ps. 102:25; Is. 42:5; 45:18; Mk. 13:19; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9; Heb. 2:10; Rev. 4:11	Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17; 1 Cor. 8:6; Heb. 1:2, 8-12	Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30
is unchanging and eternal	Ps. 90:2; 102:25-27; Is. 43:10; Mal. 3:6	Mic. 5:2; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:8-12; 13:8; Jn. 8:58	Heb. 9:14
has a distinct will	Lk. 22:42	Lk. 22:42	Acts 13:2; 1 Cor. 12:11
accepts worship	<i>Too many to (list)</i>	Mt. 14:33; Heb. 1:6	—
accepts prayer	<i>Too many to (list)</i>	Jn. 14:14; Rom. 10:9-13; 2 Cor. 12:8-9	—
is the only Savior	Is. 43:11; 45:21; Hos. 13:4; 1 Tim. 1:1	Jn. 4:42; Acts 4:12; 13:23; Phil. 3:20; 2 Tim. 1:10; Tit. 1:4; 2:13; 3:6; 2 Pet. 1:11; 2:20; 3:18; 1 Jn. 4:14	Jn. 3:5; 1 Cor. 12:3
has the power to resurrect	1 Thess. 1:8-10	Jn. 2:19; 10:17	Rom. 8:11
is called God	Jn. 1:18; 6:27; Phil. 1:2; 2:11; Eph. 4:6; 2 Thess. 1:2	Jn. 1:1-5, 14, 18; 20:28; Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:8; Tit. 2:13	Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 3:15-17
is called Mighty God	Is. 10:21; Lk. 22:69	Is. 9:6	—
is omnipresent/everywhere	1 Kgs. 8:27; Is. 46:10	Mt. 28:18-20	Ps. 139:7-10
is omnipotent/has power and authority	2 Chron. 20:6; 25:8; Job 12:13; Rom. 1:20; 1 Cor. 6:14; Jude 25	Jn. 3:31, 35; 14:6; 16:15; Phil. 2:9-11	1 Sam. 11:6; Lk. 1:35
is omniscient/all-knowing	Ps. 139:2; Is. 46:10; 1 Jn. 3:20; Acts 15:8	Jn. 16:3; 21:17	1 Cor. 2:10-11
has the fullness of God in Him (not just “a part of God”)	<i>N/A</i>	Col. 2:9	—
gives life	Gen. 1:21, 24; 2:7; Ps. 49:15; Jn.	Jn. 5:21; 14:6; 20:31; Rom. 5:21	2 Cor. 3:6; Rom. 8:11

	3:16; 5:21; 1 Tim. 6:13		
loves	Jn. 3:16; Rom. 8:39; Eph. 6:23; 1 Jn. 4:6, 16	Mk. 10:21; Jn. 15:9; Eph. 5:25; 6:23	Rom. 15:30
has ownership of believers	Ps. 24:1; Jn. 8:47	Rom. 7:4; 8:9	—
is distinct	Mt. 3:16-17; 28:19; Jn. 17:1	Mt. 3:16-17; 4:1; 28:19; Jn. 17:9	1 Sam. 19:20; Mt. 3:16-17; 4:1; 28:19
is Judge	Gen. 18:25; Ps. 7:11; 50:6; 94:1-2; 96:13; 98:9; Jn. 8:50; Rom. 2:16	Jn. 5:21-27; Acts 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1	—
forgives sin	Mic. 7:18	Lk. 7:47-50	—
claimed divinity	Ex. 20:2	Mt. 26:63-64	—
is uncreated, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End	Is. 44:6	Rev. 1:17-18; 22:13	—
lives in the believer	Jn. 14:23; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Jn. 3:24	Jn. 14:20-23; Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27	Jn. 14:16-17; Rom. 8:11; 1 Pet. 1:11
has the title of deity, “I AM,” pointing to the eternity of God	Ex. 3:14	Jn. 8:58	—
is personal and has fellowship with other persons	1 Jn. 1:3	1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Jn. 1:3	Acts 13:2; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:30; Phil. 2:1
makes believers holy (sanctifies them)	1 Thess. 5:23	Col. 1:22	1 Pet. 1:2
knows the future	Is. 46:10; Jer. 29:11	Mt. 24:1-51; 26:64; Jn. 16:32; 18:4	1 Sam. 10:10; 19:20; Lk. 1:67; 2 Pet. 1:21
is called “Lord of lords”	Dt. 10:17; Ps. 136:3	Rev. 17:14; 19:16	—

This chart is also available at <http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/2008/02/20/god-is-triune>.