

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ.
Amen.

From Genesis to Revelation the Bible states there is only one God. "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deut 6:4). "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no God"(Is 44:6). Isaiah 45:5,"I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God." I could list several other passages all making the same point. In the entire universe there is only one God. Theologically we call this strict monotheism. Mono means one and theism referring to God. One God. The Bible is very clear on this.

Within the one Being who is God, there exists eternally three coequal and coeternal persons, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We have one God and God names Himself Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We do not have three gods. We do not have one God who sometimes is the Father, who sometimes in the Son, who sometimes is the Holy Spirit. No, we have one God who exists eternally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are coeternal. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit had no beginning and have no end. "From everlasting to everlasting, you are God." Our triune God is coequal. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are fully divine, equally important, and share equally in their Divineness. The Son is not less than the Father, the Holy Spirit is not less than the Son, and the Father is not more than the Son and the Holy Spirit; they are each coequal.

If you ever ask the question, "Isn't Jesus a lesser God than the Father," it means your understanding of the Trinity falls short. Yes, Jesus gave up his right to exercise the fullness of his deity when he came to earth, but his equality with God was not altered. He willingly lowered himself, but he still shared in the Divine nature. If Jesus were anything less than God we could not be saved for salvation is completely a gift from God and paid for by God when Jesus died on the cross. A human being could not save us, only God in the person of Jesus did that for us. Paul states, "For in Him (referring to Christ) the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form" (Col 2:9).

Throughout the entire Old Testament God speaks to certain individuals like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and the prophets as well as others. In the New Testament God speaks to the entire world through Jesus (Hebrews 1:2). Every word of Jesus is the Word of God. The second person of the Trinity was not fully revealed until Jesus came. We call this the incarnation, God dwelling in human form. There are hints of the second person of the Trinity in the Old Testament but now God speaks loud and clear in and through Jesus. Jesus is God, not God the Father but God the Son. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1-3). This is a high and glorious mystery. The Mormons and the Jehovah Witness's do not agree with us on this. Jesus did the work of creation. The Mormons and Jehovah witnesses teach that Jesus Himself was created. But good solid Biblical scholarship repudiates this quite well. Jesus was not created but acted as God's agent in the actual creating. Paul writes this concerning Jesus, "For by Him, all things were created" (Colossians 1:16). Only God can create the universe, not a man. That is why we confess the Apostles Creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." God said, "Let there be light," and there was light and all the rest through the agency of the Son. The Bible says Jesus is the firstborn of all creation. The term first born does not mean Jesus was a created being. The term firstborn refers to the special relationship between the Father and the Son. It refers to the honor and dignity and love the Father has for the Son.

When you read the Gospel of John, Jesus repeatedly calls himself "I am" (ego eimi in the Greek). I am is an Old Testament name for God. We get the name Yahweh, or Jehovah from the I am statements in the Old Testament. Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, 'I Am.'" Jesus says of himself, "I am the Light." "I am the door." "I am the bread of life." "I am the good shepherd." There are several more I am statements.

One of the strongest proofs of the deity of Christ was when he announced to people that their sins were forgiven. This is one reason why some people wanted to stone him to death. Only God could forgive sins and therefore when Jesus announced a person's sins were forgiven, he was claiming to be God. This was the sin of blasphemy punishable by stoning.

After the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, Thomas took one look at Jesus and said, "My Lord and My God." Jesus did not refute that statement because that confession is the truth.

In the book of Hebrews and in the book of Revelation we read of all the angels bowing down and worshipping the Lamb who had been slain. Angels do not worship people they worship God. This is where the Jehovah Witnesses could not be more wrong. They teach that Jesus is Michael the archangel. But notice all of the angels bow down to Jesus and all means all. Jesus is superior to all the angels as is proven in the New Testament book of Hebrews (Hebrews 1).

During the days of Jesus on earth, Jesus willingly submits to the Father. Some see this and think Jesus is somehow less than and inferior to the Father. No, this is often how the Trinity works. Theologians call this the economical Trinity. The inner workings of the Trinity are quite beautiful. The triunity of God is always in agreement. The Godhead works together perfectly. The Godhead does not have heated arguments. The Son willingly submits to the Father and the Holy Spirit submits to both Father and Son. One scholar writes, "Difference in function does not indicate inferiority in nature." Further on he writes, "Father, Son, and Spirit voluntarily and freely chose the roles they would take in bringing about the redemption of God's people" (James R White, "The Forgotten Trinity" pg. 66). Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are coequal and willingly defer to the other frequently. They are one. Jesus is the one who reveals the Father to us. If it were not for Jesus we would not understand the Father as we do. Jesus said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." Jesus said, "The Father and I are one." Jesus is not the Father but came to reveal the Father and who better to reveal the Father than the one who has

always been with Him. Jesus came to serve and that He did perfectly. He did not come to be served. He came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. Dr Millard Erickson writes, "Furthermore, the perfect love and unity within the Godhead model for us the oneness and affection that should characterize our relationships within the body of Christ" (Christian Theology, pg 342 volume 1).

The Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit is not a force, is not an it. The Holy Spirit is a He, an actual person with all of the qualities of personhood. The Holy Spirit is first mentioned in the 2nd verse of the Bible. The Holy Spirit was present at creation brooding over the earth. The Spirit of God is mentioned frequently in the Old Testament but could not be as fully understood until Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out in abundance. It is the role of the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sins and show us that we need a Savior. The Holy Spirit calls you to faith in Jesus through the Gospel. The Holy Spirit helps you understand who Jesus truly is. Even as Jesus reveals the Father to you the Holy Spirit reveals Jesus. The Holy Spirit is God's Presence with us today and the Holy Spirit shares in all the attributes of God, coequal, coeternal, all powerful, all knowing, and everywhere present. The Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit works to glorify Christ. The Holy Spirit brings the love of God into our lives. The Holy Spirit moves into our lives when we become Christians and the Holy Spirit in us is God's proof of ownership. Peter speaking of the Holy Spirit in Acts 5 says, "You have not lied to men but to God." Here Peter calls the Holy Spirit God.

The Bible tells us that there is only one God. The Bible tells us that the Father is God, the Son is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God. They are of one essence. One God in three persons, coequal, coeternal, and all sharing equally in the attributes of God. The Trinity was present at creation. At the baptism of Jesus, the Father spoke, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus. Before the ascension Jesus spoke these words that we are to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Throughout the entire New Testament, the

word Trinity is never used but is implied all over the place. Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the way the Godhead fits together took years for the church to finally understand and it is the most difficult doctrine that there is to comprehend. We will not fully understand one God in three persons this side of heaven but one day it will all make sense.

Before I close I wish to make one more point about the fact that Jesus had no beginning and will have no end. Our creeds use the word "begotten" referring to Jesus. John uses the word begotten several times including in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Those that do not believe in the Deity of Christ and reject the Trinity say this because they see the word begotten and think that term means Jesus did have a beginning and was created by the Father. But the term begotten in these passages has nothing to do with origins, how one came into being. The term begotten is a term of position. Begotten means "one of a kind." Begotten means "the one and only." There is only one Son of God. He is one of a kind. He is the one and only. There is no one else like him. Begotten is a term of position not a term of origin. Jesus had no beginning and no end and when the Bible says Jesus came from or was in the bosom of the Father, that too speaks of the relationship between the Father and the Son. Jesus was at the side of the Father in terms of their relationship being very close and unique and when Jesus ascended back into heaven on Ascension Day, he returned to the right hand of the Father. It does not mean the Father created the Son. It speaks of His position with the Father, coequal and coeternal. So please do not let that term 'begotten of the Father or "coming from the bosom of the Father" throw you.

I conclude with this benediction from Paul. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." This is the Trinity revealed. Amen and Amen.