

The Trinity in History

The Trinity in History: The so-called Holy Trinity in its Liberal formulation of three separated persons is neither Biblical nor historical. It is a mystery invented primarily in the 19th century. While the trinity is often used and the "persons" are separately described there is no early view that the Godhead was separated into three Beings any more than mankind is triplets because he is a body "person" and a soul and a spirit "person." The **Son of God is** the Word of the Father in thought and actuality. By him and through him all things were made, the Father and the Son being one. It is easy to compile a long list of things the "Spirit" has done all by Himself while the "Son" is idling on a chair. This is used to prove that the Spirit is the "third person of the Godhead." However, all of these arguments work better if we acknowledge that Jesus is the name of the invisible Spirit God who guided all of the apostles into all truth. In Matthew 28, the Father, Son and Spirit (not names) all have one name -- Jesus or Jehovah-Saves. To baptize in the name of three manifestations--

Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of **Jesus Christ** for the remission of sins, and ye shall **receive the gift of the Holy Ghost**. Acts 2:38

This is not a formula for magic. And when the invisible Lord "appeared" to Saul: And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. Acts 22:8

Jesus promised to guide Paul as He had promised to guide the other apostles through the Spirit. But Paul recognized this Spirit as Lord or Jesus Christ. What follows is a tiny collection of scholarly quotations which you may find useful if anyone wants to defend the Catholic "trinity of persons" which most earlier Catholics and the Restoration Movement leaders rejected. Many of us have compromised but it is encouraging that so many are boldly returning to the Words of Christ and have given up trying to attract God with enthusiasm (believed to be Spirit) which was invented by Philo to mean "filled with the demon gods of madness." Paul to the Corinthians agreed that their speaking and singing would be seen as madness.

The spirit in History Antiphon (480 - 411 BC)

"Often at such an hour as this,
when the **body** has given up the struggle,
its salvation is the **spirit**,
which is ready to fight on in the **conscience** that it is innocent.

But it is with no such guilty conscience that I come before you. (Antiphon On the murder of Herodes 5.93)

"On the other hand, he whose conscience is guilty has
no worse enemy than that **conscience**;
for his **spirit** fails him which his body is still unwearied,
because it feels that what is approaching him
is the punishment of his iniquities.

The Trinity in History Paul

> For God is my witness, whom I **serve** with my **spirit** in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; Rom 1:9

> But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should **serve** in newness of **spirit**, and not (sewrv) in the oldness of the **letter**. Rom 7:6

> O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the **body** of this death? Romans 7:24

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the **mind** I myself **serve** the law of God; but with the **flesh** the law of sin. Romans 7:25

> THERE is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but (walk) after the **Spirit**. Romans 8:1

For the law of the **Spirit of life in** Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of **sin and death**. Romans 8:2

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: Romans 8:3

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who **walk** not after the **flesh** (external body), but after the **Spirit** (internal **mind**). Romans 8:4

> This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth **walk** not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their **mind**, Ephesians 4:17

> Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us **walk** by the same rule, let us **mind** the same thing. Ph.3:16

> How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, **purge** your **conscience** from dead works to **serve the living God**? Heb.9:14

This happens at Baptism:

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the **request for** a good **conscience** toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: 1 Pet 3:21

Suneidesis (g4893) soon-i'-day-sis; from a prol. form of 4894; co- perception, i.e. moral consciousness; - conscience.

Suneido (g4894) soon-i'-do; from 4862 and 1492; to **see completely**; used (like its prim.) only in two past tenses, respectively mean. to understand or become aware, and to be **conscious** or (**clandestinely**) **informed** of: - consider, know, be privy, be ware of.

> But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in **spirit** and in **truth**: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. John 4:23

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must **worship him in spirit** and in **truth** John 4:24

I will **worship toward** thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and **for thy truth**: for thou hast **magnified thy word** above **all thy name**. Ps.138:2

> For we are the circumcision, which **worship** God in the **spirit**, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and **have no confidence in the flesh**. Phil 3:3

Praying **always** with all **prayer** and supplication in the **Spirit**, and **watching** thereunto with **all perseverance** and supplication for all saints; Eph 6:18

But you, beloved, **building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit**, Jude 20NKJV

> I was **in the Spirit** on the Lords day, and heard behind me a great voice, **as of a trumpet**, Re.1:10

> And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy **brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.** Rev 19:10

Paul began by comparing his flesh and his spirit, he ends by speaking of his flesh and his spirit which has been freed from all external religious rituals. The only way Paul knew how to **get into** Christ was by reckoning the body dead and the spirit alive in and through baptism in connection with the finished work of Christ. He repeated this to the Galatians in the form of parallelism:

What: For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26

How: For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put (been clothed) on Christ. Galatians 3:27

Why: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

The Trinity in History Justin Martyr (c.100-165 AD)

"God begot before all creatures a **Beginning**, who was a certain **rational power from himself** and whom the Holy Ghost calls . . . sometimes the Son, . . . sometimes Lord and **Word** . . . We see things happen similarly among ourselves, for whenever we **utter some word**, we **beget a word**, yet not by any cutting off, which would diminish the word in us when we utter it. We see a similar occurrence when one fire kindles another. It is not diminished through the enkindling of the other, but remains as it was." (Dialogue with Trypho the Jew 61).

Of course, Justin being a student would understand that Christ was either the expression of the One God by speaking His word, or, Christ was actually a created, second "person." This would deny that the Word was truly God:

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning (chief or corner) of the creation of God; Revelation 3:14

In Hebrew, the spirit which hovered was the wind, because God (the Word) said that He did it all alone. Otherwise "spirit" is the mental functions of a rational being but not of a separate person.

Ruwach (h7307) roo'-akh, roo'-akh; from 7306; wind; by resemblance breath, i. e. a sensible (or even violent exhalation; fig. life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extens. a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit of a rational being including its expression and functions

Ruwach (h7306) roo'-akh; a prim. root; prop. to blow, i. e. breathe; only (lit.) to smell or (by impl. perceive (fig. to anticipate, enjoy): - accept, smell, * touch, make of quick understanding.

The Spirit was not another person in the Old Testament, nor would it be in the New Testament. In prophesying of Messiah who would be Emmanuel or "God with us," Isaiah defined "spirit."

AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: Isaiah 11:1

And the spirit (7307) of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; Isaiah 11:2

And shall make him of quick understanding (7306) in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: Isaiah 11:3

In the New Testament, Spirit means God Himself or it means the same mental disposition as the Hebrew:

Pneuma (g4151) pnyoo'-mah; from 4154; a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by anal. or figurative (Parabolic of) a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational soul, by implication: vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, doemon, or (divine) God, Christ's spirit, the Holy Ghost: - ghost, life, spirit (-ual, -ually), mind. Comp. 5590.

As personification, Paul treated His own inner nature or spirit as a separate person fighting his outward nature or body. In the same way, God swore by Himself and communed with Himself because there was no one else.

The Trinity in History 110 AD Ignatius of Antioch (d.117 A.D.)

Ignatius was a disciple of the apostle John. In 117 AD he was led from Antioch to Rome to be martyred for his faith. Along the way, he wrote seven letters -- six were addressed to various churches, the seventh to Polycarp, another disciple of John (Lightfoot, p.97). In these letters, he refers to Jesus as "God" twelve times.

"Far removed is the Father of all from those things which operate among men, the affections and passions.

He is simple, not composed of parts, without structure, altogether like and equal to **himself alone**.

He is **all mind, all spirit, all thought, all intelligent, all reason** . . . all **light**, all fountain of every good, and this is the manner in which the religious and the pious are accustomed to speak of God" (Against Heresies 2:13:3 [A.D. 189]).

Of course, this is why it was so dangerous and destructive to the Jews to worship like the pagans with loud rituals which was the "burden" Jesus came to lift. Because "worship" is in "spirit" it is a rejection of Christ's teaching to try to worship Him with our bodies in wild action.

In the new model of the trinity, the Son is begotten and the Spirit proceeds from Father and Son. Careless readers might see this as three, co-equal god persons. If the Son is a person and proceeds from the Father then He is junior to and inferior to the Father. This is solved if the reader will understand the Trinity from the early Catholic view. By analogy, my words proceed from my mind and are therefore personified as my "sons."

"Jesus Christ . . . was with the Father before the beginning of time, and in the end was revealed. . . . Jesus Christ . . . came forth from one Father and is with and has gone to one [Father]. . .

There is **one God, who has manifested himself** by Jesus Christ his Son, who is his eternal Word, not proceeding forth from silence, and who in all things pleased him that sent him" (Letter to the Magnesians 6-8).

The priest, who had been added after Mount Sinai to keep the people away from God's presence, ignored the Word and invented loud ceremonies. The persecuted prophets, on the other hand, honored Christ Who spoke to them (1 Peter 1:11):

"The prophets, who were men of God, lived according to Jesus Christ. For that reason they were persecuted, inspired as they were by his grace to convince the disobedient that there is one God, who manifested himself through his son, Jesus Christ, who is his Word proceeding from silence, and who was in all respects pleasing to him that sent him" (Letter to the Magnesians 8:1).

When John wrote, the church had misinterpreted the other writers. His gospel account corrects the view which Paul also corrected when He identified the Spirit as Jesus Christ in Spirit in all of His letters. Ignatius would have understood first hand what John clearly said:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another (of the same kind) Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; John 14:16
Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: John 14:17
but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: **I will come to you.** John 14:18

John's account of the gospel was written around 100 A. D. and

"The author **was not using the Greek word logos in the same way as Philo**: he appears to have been more in tune with Palestinian than Hellenized Judaism. In the Aramaic translations of the Hebrew scriptures known as the targums, which were being composed at this time, the term **Membra** (word) is used to describe God's activity in the world. It performs the same function as other technical terms like "glory," "Holy Spirit" and "Shekinah" which emphasized the distinction between God's presence in the world, and the incomprehensible reality of God itself. Like the divine Wisdom (Sophia), the "Word" symbolized God's original plan for creation. When Paul and John spoke about Jesus as though he had some kind of preexistent life, they were not suggesting that he was a second divine "person" in the later Trinitarian sense. They were indicating that Jesus had transcended temporal and individual modes of existence. Because the "power" and "Wisdom" that he represented were activities that derived from God, he had in some way expressed "what there was from the beginning." (Karen Armstrong, A History of God, p. 89).

"In his letter To Alabius: That there are not Three Gods, Gregory of Nyssa outlined his important doctrine of the **inseparability** or coinherence of the three divine persons or **hypostases**.

One should not think of God splitting himself up into three parts; that was a grotesque and indeed blasphemous idea. "God expressed himself wholly and totally in each one of these three **manifestations** when he wished to reveal himself to the world... the Divine Nature is equally present in each phase of the operation... The three persons **do not exist side by side** in the divine world." (Armstrong, Karen, History of God, 116-117)

Wisdom in the book of Proverbs is "Sophia" which in Gnosticism is connected to Zoe and between the two of them the world was dominated through weak, powerless musical sub-leaders. The Gnostics still arrive at this view because Wisdom is treated Just like the Word, as God's first-created "creature." If the "Word" is the second person of the creation then "Wisdom" as the second person of the Godhead, is a female and has a right to dominate the more rational but inferior males through the use of what the Hypostasis of the Archons clearly describes as a "musical worship team." None of us have to be embarrassed if we understand symbolic language.

Clement of Alexandria (b. AD 150, Athens--d. between 211 and 215)

Chapter II.-Our Instructor's Treatment of Our Sins.

Now, O you, my children, **our Instructor is like His Father God**, whose son He is, sinless, blameless, and with a soul devoid of passion; **God in the form of man**, stainless, the minister of **His Father's** will, the Word **who is God**, who is **in** the Father, who is **at** the Father's right hand, and **with the form of God is God**. He is to us a **spotless** image; to Him we are to try with all our might to assimilate our souls. He is wholly **free from human passions**; wherefore also He alone is judge, because He alone is **sinless**. As far, however, as we can, let us try to sin as little as possible. For nothing is so urgent in the first place as deliverance from passions and disorders, and then the checking of our liability to fall into sins that have become habitual. Wherefore the **Word**, the **Instructor**, has taken the charge of us, in order to the prevention of sin, which is contrary to reason.

The Trinity in History Athenagoras (177 AD)

"I have sufficiently demonstrated that we are not atheists, since we acknowledge **one** God, unbegotten, eternal, invisible, incapable of being acted upon, incomprehensible, unbounded, who is known only by understanding and reason, who is encompassed by light and beauty and spirit and indescribable power, by whom all things, **through his word**, have been produced and set in order and are kept in existence" (Plea for the Christians 10)

When Athenagoras speaks of the Son as the first thing God created, he did not speak of the Son as a separate divine person. Rather, God's thought gives rise to the word as the product of His Mind or Spirit. They are propelled out by his breath or spirit:

"The **Son of God is the Word of the Father** in thought and actuality. By him and through him all things were made, **the Father and the Son being one.**

Since the Son is in the Father

and the Father is in the Son by the unity and power of the Spirit,

"the **Mind and Word of the Father is the Son of God.**

"And if, in your exceedingly great wisdom, it occurs to you to inquire what is meant by 'the Son,' I will tell you briefly: He is the first-begotten of the Father, not as having been produced,

for from the beginning **God had the Word in himself**, God being eternal **mind** and eternally **rational**, but as coming forth to be the model and energizing force of all material things" (Plea for the Christians 10:2-4)

But to us there is but one God,

> the Father,

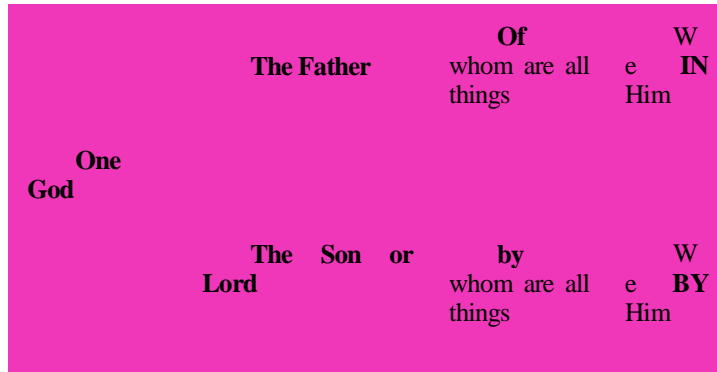
of whom are all things, and we in him; and

> one Lord Jesus Christ,

by whom are all things, and we by him. 1 Cor 8:6

**Full
invisible
Deity**

**Manifestations
(personae)**



Paul always spoke of Jesus Christ in His invisible nature instructing, and guiding him into all truth as the Spirit. Jesus Christ, therefore, is the Spirit or the expression of God's Mind:

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 1 Cor 2:10

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God (which is in Him). 1 Cor 2:11

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit **which** is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 1 Cor 2:12

Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1 Cor 2:13

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually (figuratively or parabolically) discerned. 1 Cor 2:14

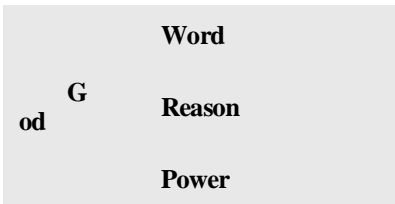
For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the **mind of Christ**. 1 Cor 2:16

Because God's Spirit is to God what our spirit is to us, when our spirit is informed and motivated by God's Spirit then we have a Spirit. This Spirit is not a "Ghost" but the Mind of Jesus Christ. And Jesus said that It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. John 6:63

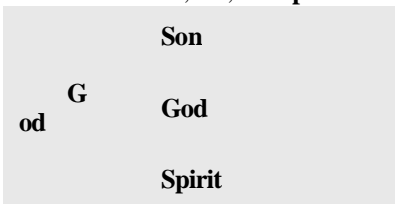
By defining "spirit" as bodily enthusiasm pumped up in order to impress the audience into returning, we are actually quenching the Spirit obtainable only through His Word and placing our bodies squarely in the place Jesus should stand if He is among us. To the Jews, this presence was only there when the name of God was honored by reading and singing His words. To that end, the rabbi were forbidden to allegorize or "applicate" the Word to situations not included in the Word.

The Trinity in History Tertullian (c.160-220 AD)

But, first, I shall discuss His essential nature, and so the nature of His birth will be understood. We have already asserted that **God** made the world, and all which it contains, by His **Word**, and **Reason**, and **Power**. It is abundantly plain that your philosophers, too, regard the **Logos**-that is, the **Word** and **Reason**-as the Creator of the universe.



For Zeno lays it down that he is the creator, having made all things according to a determinate **plan**; that his name is Fate, and God, and the soul of Jupiter, and the necessity of all things. Cleanthes ascribes all this to spirit, which he maintains pervades the universe. And we, in like manner, hold that the **Word**, and **Reason**, and **Power**, by which we have said **God** made all, have **spirit** as their proper and **essential substratum**, in which the **Word** has in being to give **forth utterances**, and **reason** abides to **dispose and arrange**, and **power** is over all to **execute**. We have been taught that **He** (reason) proceeds forth from God, and **in that procession He is generated**; so that He is the **Son of God**, and is called **God** from **unity of substance** with God. For God, too, is a **Spirit**.



Even when the ray is shot from the sun, it is **still** part of the parent mass; the sun will still be in the ray, because it is a ray of the sun- there is **no division of substance**, but merely an extension. Thus Christ is Spirit of Spirit, and God of God, as light of light is kindled. The material matrix remains entire and unimpaired, though you derive from it **any number** of shoots possessed of its **qualities**; 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 **He did not withdraw** from the **original source**, but went forth. This **ray** of God, then, as it was always foretold in ancient times, descending into a certain virgin, and made flesh in her womb, is in His birth **God** and **man** united.

The Trinity in History Gregory Thaumaturgus [A.D. 205-265]

And we, indeed, without ambiguity apprehend that **our soul** dwells in **us** in union with the **body**; but still, who has ever seen his own soul? who has been able to discern its conjunction with his body? This one thing is all we know certainly, that there is a soul within us **conjoined** with the body. Thus, then, we reason and believe that the **Word** is **begotten** by the Father, albeit we neither possess nor know the clear *rationale* of the fact. The Word Himself is before every creature-eternal froth the Eternal, like spring from spring, and **light** from **light**.

The **vocable Word**, indeed, belongs to those three genera of words which are named in Scripture, and which are not substantial,-namely, the word *conceived*, the word *uttered*, and the word *articulated*.

The word *conceived*, certainly, is **not substantial**. The word *uttered*, again, is that voice which the **prophets hear** from God, or the prophetic speech itself; and even this is not substantial. And, lastly, the word *articulated* is the speech of man formed forth in **air** (*aere efformatus*), composed of terms, which also is not substantial. But the Word of God is **substantial**, endowed with an exalted and enduring nature, and is **eternal with Himself**, and is **inseparable from Him**, and can never fall away, but shall remain in an everlasting union.

The Trinity in History Lactantius (307 AD)

"When we speak of God the Father and God the Son, we **do not** speak of them as different, **nor do we separate them**, because the Father cannot exist without the Son, nor can the Son be separated from the Father, since the name of 'Father' cannot be given without the Son, nor can the Son be begotten without the Father. . . . They both have **one mind, one spirit, one substance**; but

the former [the Father] is as it were an overflowing fountain, the latter [the Son] as a stream flowing forth from it. The former as the sun, the latter as it were a ray [of light] extended from the sun" Jesus claimed that all of the authority bound up in the images of Father, Son and Spirit was now bound up in Him as full Deity (Mat 28:19; Col. 2:9). Therefore, after Pentecost and beyond for hundreds of years the church followed Peter's lead in Acts 2:38 and baptized in the name of Jesus: the "name" of Father is Jesus, the "name" of Son is Jesus and the "name" of the Spirit is Jesus. There is no other name given! Therefore, it is tragic when we worship three "names" which are not names. In our household, "the name of the wife, and of the mother and of the grandmother, is Katy." Wife is not a name; mother is not a name; grandmother is not a name.

On the other hand, Lactantius noted, and Alexander Campbell agreed that: "We, on the other hand, are truly religious, who make our supplications to the **one** true God. "Some one may perhaps ask how, when we say that we worship **one** God only, we nevertheless assert that there are two, God the Father and God the Son--which assertion has driven many into the greatest error . . . [thinking] that we confess that there is another God, and that He is mortal. . . .

[But w]hen we speak of God the Father and God the Son, **we do not speak of them as different, nor do we separate each**, because the Father cannot exist without the Son, nor can the Son be separated from the Father" (Divine Institutes, 4:28-29).

The "spirit" was still not thought of as a third member of the God family.

The Trinity in History Council of Nicea 325

See notes by SocratesScholasticus.

The first interest in the idea of a triad of gods did not occur until Constantine demanded a council to settle the problems with Arius who denied that Jesus was the presence of God in a visible form. The word "homoousios" had been used to define Son and Father as One and not two gods. Therefore, Arius was defeated, the Son was defined as God but later editions muddied the waters:

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, i.e., of the nature of the Father. God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, of one substance (Greek: homoousios) with the Father, by whom all things were made, both things in heaven and things on earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh and assumed man's nature, suffered and rose the third day, ascended to heaven, (and) shall come again to judge the quick and the dead. **And in the Holy Ghost**. But the holy and apostolic church anathematizes those who say that there was a time when he was not, and that he was made from things not existing, or from another person or being, saying that the Son of God is mutable, or changeable."

This refuted the modern formulation of three persons so defined that they can stand side by side or face to face and comprise a standing committee for the government of the universe. Those who explained Nicea wrote:

"Thus also the declaration that "the Son is consubstantial with the Father" having been discussed,

it was agreed that this **must not** be understood in a **corporeal** sense,

or in any way **analogous to mortal creatures**;

inasmuch as it is neither by **division** of substance,

nor by **abscission** nor by any change of the Father's substance and power."

This creed defined Jesus as not just a man but God. It does not speak of three "persons" in the eternal sense. There is no reference to the Holy Ghost as a separate person in the Godhead, but almost as an afterthought it merely expresses a belief in the Holy Ghost. Therefore, the issue was over the Father and Son while the Spirit was not really under consideration.

The Trinity in History Basil The Great 368

John used the word Logos (in the Greek versions) or Word to show that Christ's creative **speaking** or discourse is the way His Mind projects Spirit power from His figurative Lips. God "rides upon the wings of the spirit" and He "covers us with His feathers." Yet, we know that God is illustrating His infinite power with human-like, finite, parable words. If we do not get it then we know that Jesus is still hiding the Truth from us.

The Trinity in History Gregory of Nazianz (380 AD)

"What was in the beginning? 'The Word,' he says. . . .

Why the **Word**? So that we might know that he proceeded **from the mind**.

Why the **Word**? Because he was **begotten without passion**.

Why the **Word**? Because he is **image** of the Father who **begets him**, showing forth the Father fully, **in no way separated from him**, and subsisting perfectly in himself, just as **our** word entirely befits **our** thought" (Eulogies and Sermons 16:3).

"He is called Son because he is identical to the Father in essence; and not only this, but also because he is of him. He is called only-begotten not because He is a unique Son . . . but because he is Son in a unique fashion and **not in a corporeal way**.

He is called Word because he is to the Father

what a word is to the mind" (Orations 30:20). (Paul agrees: 1 Corinthians 2).

The Athanasian Creed of 381 is the first demand by Catholics that the triad of gods must be worshipped. At the same time they insisted that while Father is Lord, son is Lord and Spirit is Lord but there are not three Lords. This doctrine forced the division between eastern and western Catholicism in 1054.

The Trinity in History Augustine (416 AD)

Augustine defines the triad of gods as personae because he can think of no other word to describe something which is three yet one. He wrote a lot about the trinity and yet he said: "In the way that you **speak** a word that you have in your heart and it is with you . . . that is how God issued the Word, that is to say, how he **begot** the Son.

And you, indeed, beget a word too in your heart, without temporal preparation; God begot the Son outside of time, the Son through whom he created all things" (Homilies on John 14:7) (This means that the Spirit was not a person and did not have sexual intercourse with Mary) Like the genetic code, human Genome or human "tablet" which must be "read" before a child can be born without four legs, God's "Word" is God's Thought put into action by simply speaking: "He speaks, it is done." If we ignore that Word as God's Thoughts put into action we will ridicule the Scriptures by cutting and pasting and we will create a bunch of spiritual freaks. The belief in a personal incarnation quite naturally leads to the belief that whatever comes out of our mouth is more important than the Word which is clearly treated as the outdated work of the "second" person. Paul would tell the Corinthians that they felt so wise but looked like they were mad or insane.

If the word "son" means that the Word was begotten by God as we tend to believe, then the Spirit "who" proceeds from both the Father and Son would be another son of the Father and a son of the son. Furthermore, the spirit person and the son person would be brothers! And the Father would be the Spirit's grandfather! This is the absolutely logical conclusion to the three-people godhead of paganism, where the "mother" member of the triad godhead was both mother and wife of the son. The extension was naturally that Mary is the mother of God!

"For so thou wilt see how the birth of the Word of God differs from the procession of the **Gift of God**, on account of which the only-begotten Son did not say that the Holy Spirit is **begotten of the Father**, otherwise He would be His **brother**, but that he proceeds from Him. Whence, since the Spirit of both is a kind of **consubstantial communion** of Father and Son, He is not called, far be it from us to say so, the Son of both. To believe this "three people in one people" is not comprehensible, and for modern Catholics to call it a mystery which we must accept even when it is ridiculous is to charge the entire Godhead with the inability to say what they (He) meant. If, however, we turn to the Lord, the mind will be opened and we will see that Christ is full Deity and lives within the hearts of His people and His name is Jesus. Otherwise, we will be like the Jews who performed great rituals but couldn't understand the Word which is the Mind of Christ which is pure or Holy.: "But thou canst not fix thy sight there, so as to discern this lucidly and clearly; I know thou canst not. I say the truth, I say to myself, I know what I cannot do; yet that light itself shows to thee these three things in thyself, wherein thou mayest recognize an image of the highest Trinity itself, which thou canst not yet contemplate with steady eye.

"Itself shows to thee that there is in thee a true word, when it is born of thy knowledge, i.e. when we say what we know: although we neither utter nor think of any articulate word that is significant in any tongue of any nation, but **our** thought is formed by that which we know; and there is in the mind's eye of the thinker an **image** resembling that thought which the memory contained, will or love as a **third** combining these two as parent and offspring. So too, the Bible treats the Spirit as the Mind of both Father and Son. He is not a third god but the Mind or Spirit which ties Father and Son together under the name: Jesus Christ.

"And he who can, sees and discerns that this will proceeds indeed from thought (for no one wills that of which he is absolutely ignorant what or of what sort it is), yet is not an image of the thought: and so that there is insinuated in this intelligible thing a sort of difference between birth and procession, since to behold by thought is not the same as to desire, or even to enjoy will.

"Thou, too, hast been able to discern this, although thou hast not been, neither art, able to unfold with adequate speech what, amidst the clouds of bodily likenesses, which cease not to flit up and down before human thoughts, thou hast scarcely seen. But that light which is not thyself shows thee this too, that these incorporeal likenesses of bodies are different from the truth, which, by rejecting them, we contemplate with the understanding. Trinity, Book 5

John Calvin On Genesis

John Calvin On the Godhead

"God." Moses has it Elohim, a noun of the plural number. Whence the inference is drawn, that the three Persons of the Godhead are here noted; but since, as a proof of so great a matter, it appears to me to have little solidity, will not insist upon the word; but rather caution readers to beware of violent glosses (adding footnotes to the revealed Word) of this, kind.

"They think that they have testimony against the Asians, to prove the Deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "but in the meantime they **involve themselves in the error of Sabellius**, because Moses afterwards subjoins that the Elohim had spoken, and that the holy Spirit of the Elohim rested upon the waters. If we suppose three persons to be here denoted, there will be no distinction between them. For it will follow, both that the Son is begotten by himself, and that the Spirit is not of the Father, but of himself. For me it is sufficient that the **plural number expresses** those powers which God exercised in creating the world. Moreover I acknowledge that the Scripture, although it recites many powers of the Godhead, yet always **recalls** us to the Father, and his Word, and spirit, as we shall shortly see. "But those absurdities, to which I have alluded, forbid us with subtlety to distort what Moses simply declares concerning God himself, by applying it to the separate Persons of the Godhead. This, however, I regard as beyond controversy, that from the peculiar circumstance of the passage itself, a title is here ascribed to God, expressive of that powers which was previously in some way included in his eternal essence.

The Trinity in History John of Damascus Book Four

The book "Concerning the Orthodox Faith" Donatus Veronensis caused to be printed at Verona first in Greek only, and presented it to Clement the Seventh in the year 1531

Now we are baptized into the Holy Trinity because those things which are baptized have need of the Holy Trinity for their maintenance and continuance, and the three subsistences **cannot be otherwise than present**, the one with the other. For the Holy Trinity is **indivisible**. The Greek theologians, founding on the primary sense of the Greek term **Pneuma**, and on certain passages of Scripture in which the word seemed to retain that sense more or less (especially Psalm xxxiii. 6. in the Vulgate rendering, verbo Dei coeli formati sunt: et spiritu oris ejus omnis virtus eorum), spoke of the Holy Ghost as proceeding from the Father **like the breath of His mouth** in the **utterance** or emission of His **Word**. so the Holy Spirit is like an impulse and movement within that supernatural essence.

Jonathan Edwards - Unpublished Manuscript

Jonathan Edwards, a Calvinist, of New England fame, wrestled with the Catholic idea of the triad of three persons all of his public life. However, in an unpublished manuscript he confessed: "**Christ** is called "the **wisdom** of God."

"If we are taught in the Scripture that Christ is the same with God's **wisdom** or **knowledge**, "then it teaches us that He is the same with God's perfect and eternal **idea**. They are the same as we have already observed and I suppose none will deny. But Christ is said to be the **Wisdom** of God (I Cor. 1:24, Luke 11:49, compare with Matt. 23:34); and how much doth Christ speak in Proverbs under the name of Wisdom especially in the 8th chapter. "And this I suppose to be that blessed Trinity that we read of in the Holy Scriptures. The Father is the Deity subsisting in the prime, un-originated and most absolute manner, or the Deity in its direct existence. The Son is the Deity generated by God's **understanding**, or having an idea of Himself and subsisting in that idea. The Holy Ghost is the Deity subsisting in act, or the Divine essence flowing out and breathed forth in God's Infinite love to and delight in Himself. And I believe the whole Divine essence does truly and distinctly subsist both in the Divine idea and Divine love, and that each of them are properly distinct Persons.

"There are two more eminent and remarkable images of the triad among the creatures. The one is in the **spiritual creation**, the soul of man. There is the **mind**, and the **understanding** or **idea**, and the **spirit of the mind** as it is called in Scripture, i.e., the **disposition**, the will or affection. The other is in the **visible creation**, viz., the Sun. The **father** is as the substance of the Sun. (By substance I don't mean in a philosophical sense, but the Sun as to its internal constitution.) The **Son** is as the brightness and glory of the disk of the Sun or that bright and glorious form under which it appears to our eyes. The Holy Ghost is the **action of the Sun** which is within the Sun in its intestine heat, and, being diffusive, enlightens, warms, enlivens and comforts the world. The Spirit as it is God's Infinite love to Himself and happiness in Himself, is as the internal heat of the Sun, but as it is that by which God communicates Himself, it is as the emanation of the sun's action, or the emitted beams of the sun.

Charles Fillmore

"In the 1st chapter of Genesis it is the great creative **Mind** that is at work. The record portrays just how divine ideas were brought into expression. As man must have an **idea** before he can bring an idea into manifestation, so it is with the creations of God.

"When a man builds a house **he builds it first in his mind**. He has the idea of a house, he completes the plan in his mind, and then he works it out in manifestation. Thus God created the universe. The 1st chapter of Genesis describes the ideal creation. The 1st chapter shows two parts of the Trinity: mind, and idea in mind. In the 2d chapter we have the third part, manifestation. In this illustration all theological mystery about the Trinity is cleared away, for we see that it is simply mind, idea in mind, and manifestation of idea.

"Since man is the offspring of God, made in the image and likeness of Divine Mind, **he must express himself under the laws of this great creative Mind**. The law of manifestation for man is the **law of thought**. God ideates: man thinks. One is the completion of the other in mind. And we might note that God didn't create Adam as triplets.

Walter Scott, Restoration Leader, Christian Baptist, Feb 1827

"Again--Some will say, What does the expression Holy Spirit mean? Well, in scripture it stands **first for God the Holy Spirit**, and secondly for the holy mind or spirit of a believer--for illustration, take Peter's words to Ananias, "Why has Satan tempted you to lie to the Holy Spirit; you have not lied to men, but to God," (the Holy Spirit.)

"And the Saviour says, How much more will your heavenly Father give a holy spirit (as it should be translated) to those that ask him. Again--Praying in a holy spirit. Again--Paul says he approved himself God's servant "by knowledge, by long sufferings, by kindness, by a holy spirit" by a mind innocent of the love of gain, or commerce, or sensuality.

"How then the expression stands for both God the Holy Spirit, and for a believer's spirit made holy by him.

"I shall now answer, from scripture, the following questions.-- When do we know that we are born of the Spirit? I answer, when we know that our spirits are holy. But it will be asked again, when do we know this? I reply, when we behold our minds producing the fruits of a holy spirit. But what are the fruits of a holy spirit? Paul says they are joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance, against such there is no (written) law.

Scott then shows that ideas like the triad of three "people" comes from human knowledge and by those who have no spiritual discernment: "Now, reader, let us return to God and holiness, for without it no one shall see his face--and believe me that a disputatious mind is not holy mind--an intemperate, unmeeke, or unfaithful spirit is not a holy spirit--neither is one that does not practise goodness, and gentleness, and long suffering, and peace--neither the mind that does not love, or does not rejoice in Jesus. Ye cavillers, ye conceited: few, **who boast of your scriptural knowledge; but whose spirits, nevertheless**, cannot move even the elements of the heavenly oracles, let me whisper to you a secret, that the kingdom of heaven is not so much in an abundant knowledge, as in an abundant spirit of righteousness, peace and holy joy.

Alexander Campbell

Men like Thomas and Alexander Campbell were scholars of the highest order and Alexander moved within the circle of Thomas Jefferson. He fully understood Scripture and the church fathers and would have been considered ignorant or Catholic to speak of God as really a family of three gods. The Holy Ghost was not another person by the very definition of both the Hebrew and Greek words. Rather, as Paul insisted that our spirit is that knowing part of us, God's Spirit is the knowing nature of God. You never want to separate your spirit from your body even though you may, like Paul, get into conflict:

"And with respect to the Holy Spirit, they believe that he is the 'Spirit of God,' the 'Comforter,' the '**Spirit** of Christ,' who spoke by the prophets and apostles, filling them with **divine wisdom** and **power**; and that he is 'the gift of God,' by whose presence they are rendered 'temples of the living God,' and 'sanctified,' 'renewed,' and saved." (Alexander Campbell, Mill Harb, 1854)

Two passages make it clear that the Same Spirit or Full Deity (Col 2:9) which indwelt the man Jesus was the Spirit God Who spoke to the prophets: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 1 Peter 1:11

And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Revelation 19:10

"The Spirit is present in his Word, and we hear him in our hearts when his Word is in us and moves us. Only in and through (by the means of) his Word does the Spirit dwell in us, speak to us, impel and control us." (Ibid p 510)

As clearly as God can say it, that is what Christ the Spirit said: It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. John 6:63

Christ present in His Word never promised to be in "worship" meetings where His Voice is drowned out with loud, insecure noise:

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Matthew 18:20

Jews could now approach God in spirit (mind) and without the mediation of a priestly caste and an elaborate ritual.... charity was the most important mitzvah in the Torah; when two or three Jews studied the Torah together, God was in their midst. The Pharisees later became the most respected members of the Jewish race. While other assemblies may be profitable, those called without the word and the Supper at the core do not invite Christ the Spirit in. When God's Shekinah or Spirit shone at Mount Sinai, the Israelites said, "Take it away, we don't want to hear the clear Words of God and from God." This Glory was the Spirit Christ Who was also Pillar, Rock, Water, Manna and "breather" of revelation into the prophets. When they rejected Christ the Spirit, God closed their eyes and plugged their ears and they were lost:

But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. 2 Corinthians 3:14

But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. 2 Corinthians 3:15

Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. 2 Corinthians 3:16

Now the **Lord is that Spirit**: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 2 Corinthians 3:17

If we fail to understand the Spirit or Mind of Christ it is because we are deliberately ignorant of the Word of God and He has closed our eyes and we may be beyond redemption as both blind and deaf.

Thomas Campbell

Thomas Campbell tended to say: "On the one hand this, but on the other hand that." He describes the One Personal Being as three separate natures acting totally as one and yet so described as to warn us not to treat the natures of God as separate agents. While holding to three individualities they were contained within the one Being. "Is it farther queried, how could the Father bring forth or **exhibit his Son** in human nature, or how could divinity and humanity be so united as to constitute but **one individual person**? We might as rationally query, how can soul and body, matter and mind be so united as to make but one individual being or person?

"It appears to be a query with some who profess to hold this doctrine, whether it be correct to use the **term person** when speaking of the above distinct characters (personae) in the divine essence. As to this, let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. In the mean time, all that we pretend to say in favor of this application of the term is, that although the term person (which, in relation to men, signifies a distinct intelligent agency or rational being, coexisting with others in the same common nature), **"is not manifestly applied in the Holy Scriptures to any of the Sacred Three: nor indeed can be so applied in strict propriety, according to its literal and obvious acceptation;**" for when applied to God, instead of meaning a distinct intelligent being coexisting with others in the same common nature, we must mean by it, if we think and speak correctly, **one and the self-same individual being so existing as to constitute in and to itself** so many distinct or different, real and relative characters, or subsistences, each of which is but **another name for the self-same individual** essence or being considered as existing in the specified relation of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(Note: Character means an actor representing a distinct group. The early scholars used the word personae but never person. Thus God reveals Himself in flesh, soul or life and spirit or mind eliminating all other roles. Subsistences means the status of something which exists and proves His total, undivided existence or reality.) "Yet seeing the Scriptures manifestly declare that the one Jehovah exists in **three distinct intelligent agents**, each of which is the one Jehovah so existing, for there is **but one such being**; and seeing that the personal pronouns, I, thou, he, we, us, are assumed and used in the Holy Scriptures, by, or in relation to, each or all of the divine characters;

therefore, keeping in view the **essential and indivisible unity of the divine nature**, we think that we speak intelligibly and consistently with sacred truth, when we thus use the term person; and we presume, when taken in this sense, it will apply to the divine characters with as strict propriety as almost any other term in human language that is applied to God; for it must be granted, that in but few instances, if any, human language will strictly and properly apply to the divine nature; **therefore, when so applied, it must, for the most part, be used in a figurative and analogous sense.**

"Again, it is a query with others, who profess to hold this doctrine, whether the relative terms Father, Son and Spirit, be real or economical. To this we would reply, that if we allow the Holy Scriptures to speak at all intelligibly upon this most profound and sacred subject, we must understand the above appellation as declarative of real internal essential relations, independent of any external work or economy whatever. Thomas Campbell noted that if Scripture does not describe the internal relationship as body, soul and spirit describes the three relationships within our own being, then this means that there are three separate gods. And the conclusions must be reached that: "the Scriptures do not reveal to us three distinct characters so related; "but three distinct independent divinities or Gods, necessarily self-existent, and absolutely independent of each other; each and every one of them possessing the self-same properties, and of course, each of them so exactly the same in all respects, as to be absolutely undistinguishable one from another, by any means, property or attribute whatsoever; and, of course, three eternal self-existent independent coexistent Gods; each of them infinitely complete or perfect in and of himself, as possessing every possible perfection of being. "A supposition this, not less repugnant to our reason than to the most express and unequivocal declarations of Holy Scripture, for the divine characters are constantly represented as coexisting in the most intimate and inseparable unity of essential relationship..**Barton W. Stone**

Barton W. Stone was accused of being an Arian but the modern view that the Godhead is three separated beings in an ordered existence (H. Leo Boles, Rubel Shelly).

"The doctrine of a plurality of persons in the one God, is argued from the plural termination of the Hebrew word Elohim, translated God. As great stress is laid on this argument, I will particularly examine it. Here it will be necessary to introduce the rule in the Hebrew Grammar, by which we shall determine the point. "Pluralis pro singulari positus, denotat magnitudinem, et excellentiam"--which, literally translated, is, "A plural put for a singular denotes greatness and excellency."--Robertson's Heb. Gram., p. 240.

"Now, according to this rule, Elohim, God (Jehovah), is put in the plural; because the word expresses dignity and majesty. For the same reason, the Lord said unto Moses, "See, I have made thee Elohim, a God unto Pharaoh"--Exod. 7, 1. No one supposes, that because Moses was called Elohim in the plural, there must have been a plurality of persons in him; but he was so called because of his dignity and greatness.

For the same reason Aaron called the molten calf he made Elohim--Exod. 32, 4, 8--wishing, by expressing it in the plural, to attach dignity and majesty to it, and by this means to excite reverence in the minds of its worshippers.

"For the same reason, the Israelites called their idol Baal-berith, their Elohim, God --Judges 9:33.--And the Philistines called their idol Dagon, in the plural, Elohim, God--Judges 16, 23, 24. Also the idol Ashteroth, Chemosh, Milcom, Baalzebub, Nisroch, &c. though each is in the singular; yet each is called Elohim, God, in the plural--1 Kings, 11, 33; 2 Kings, 1, 2, & 19, 37. No doubt that those idol worshippers expressed their particular idol in the plural, because of its supposed dignity, majesty and excellence. (Note: not all references are right. We have corrected some) "Again, we will apply the same rule to the plural word Adonim, master, "And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham, his master," his Adonim in the plural--Genesis 24, 9, 10, 51. So Potiphar is called Joseph's Adonim, master --Genesis 39, 2, 3, 7, 8, 16, 19, 20. So the captain of a guard was called in the plural Adonim, lord--Genesis 40, 7. So Joseph, the ruler of Egypt, was called Adonim, a lord--Genesis 42, 30, 33, & 44, 8. In all these places the plural is used for the singular, according to the well known rule; because the word expresses dominion, dignity and greatness.

"It would be unnecessary to multiply quotations. These surely are sufficient to prove to any unprejudiced mind, that the plural word, put for a singular, does not imply a plurality of persons. If it does, then there was a plurality of persons in Moses--in Aaron's calf--in each of the idols I have named--in Abraham--in Potiphar--in Joseph--and in the captain of Pharaoh's guard. There are surely none who will affirm it. If not, why, or how can they affirm, that there is a plurality of persons in the one God, because he is called Elohim?"

"If then all agree, that there is but one only living and true God; all must agree that there are not two or three such Gods. If all agree that this one only God is an infinite spirit without parts; all must agree that this infinite spirit is not a compound of two or three spirits, beings, or Gods. These things are abundantly evident, concerning which there can be no dispute.

"The word Trinity is not found in the Bible. This is acknowledged by the celebrated Calvin, who calls the Trinity "a popish God, or idol, a mere human invention, a barbarous, insipid, and profane word; and he utterly condemns that prayer in the litany--

O holy, glorious, and blessed Trinity,

"as unknown to the prophets and apostles, and grounded upon no testimony of God's holy word." Admon. 1st. ad Polonos--Cardale's true Doct.--The language, like the man, I confess is too severe. "It is commonly stated, that there are three persons in one God, of one substance, power and eternity. To me it is evident that they, who maintain this proposition, "do not--cannot believe, that these three persons are three distinct spirits, "beings or Gods, each possessed of the personal properties of intelligence, will and power; for this would not only contradict the scriptures, but also those sections of their creeds just quoted, which declare that there is but one only living and true God, without parts.

"They must understand the term persons in God, not in the proper and common sense of the word person; but in such a qualified sense as to exclude the notion of three distinct spirits or beings. What this qualified sense should be, has long puzzled divines; and in no proposition are they more divided. "The cause of this perplexity is obvious, because no idea of it is to be found in revelation, nor reason.

"Revelation no where declares that there are three persons of the same substance in the one only God; and it is universally acknowledged to be above reason.--Imagination has been set afloat, taking different courses in different men, and wandering through the unknown fields of eternity, infinity and incomprehensibility. Their labors have been great; but after all their vast excursions, they have ended in mystery.

"That God is an uncompounded, eternal, infinite and unchangeable being, no Christian will deny in positive terms; yet this plain, fundamental doctrine has been so darkened by human inventions, that the minds of many have been warped from the simplicity of it. To define a person, as the fathers have done, to be "complete intelligent and individual subsistence, which is neither a part of, nor sustained by any other"; and to say that three such persons or subsistences are in the Godhead, is undoubtedly contrary to Scripture, and perfectly unintelligible. But there is but one God, though revealed under different names or relations to his creatures. (Letters to a Friend)

When Barton Stone protested that without any Biblical authority the newer Catholic view was expressed in the words:

O holy, glorious, and blessed Trinity,

We should understand that most churches then and many churches of God, Presbyterians and others to this day insist that the church obey the explicit command of Paul to sing the revealed Words of Christ. Many Presbyterians around the world outside of the influence of Nashville and Hollywood still stick to the Bible and many still reject instruments. This undoubtedly makes Christ who composed the songs and sermons and Paul who wrote the command happy.

Thomas Cleland Letters to Barton W. Stone (1822)

Thomas Cleland was the primary opposition to Barton W. Stone's views of the Trinity. While he discusses events such as the baptism of Jesus to prove three "persons" he, like all ancient trinitarians, corrects himself lest he go too far: We are not afraid to acknowledge that "the word Trinity is not found in the Bible." But we fearlessly avow that the truth conveyed by that term is to be found there. The Greek word **Trias**, or **Trinity**, was introduced into the church in the second century, to express the threefold **personality**, or triune **appellation** of the Godhead. This and the terms before mentioned were employed by the fathers of the church **in opposition to various heretics for a clearer or more full and definite expression of their doctrines.**

By the **word persons**, when applied to the Godhead, **we do not understand**, some **separate existences** of a **different nature**; but united personal distinctions in the same nature. In our contemplations on this great subject, the distinction between a **human** and a **divine person** ought to be particularly attended to, as it would in some measure free the mind from perplexity, and save a great deal of time and unnecessary debate. **Peter, James and John, were three persons**, but they **were separated from each other**; they had only the same kind of nature, which is generally called a **common specific nature**, but not the same individual nature with another person. They were likewise **as many beings as they were persons**, each one having his own proper being, separate and distinct from all other persons or beings of human kind. **But none of these things are applicable to the divine persons** in the Godhead; for they, however distinguished by their personal characters, and properties, **are never separated**, as having the same divine essence or nature. And moreover, this nature **is the same individual** nature of the persons in the Godhead, and **because the Divine Being or essence is but one**, therefore the Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is the very same; and this is what we understand when we say, there are three persons in the Godhead of the same substance, equal in power and glory, and do constitute the only living and true God. But why should we be obliged to explain ourselves so often on this subject?

We repeat it again, that we use the **word person** and such like terms, merely from the **poverty of language**; merely to designate our belief of a real distinction in the Godhead, and not to describe or explain how three are one and one three, **Oral Roberts**

"Who is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is the other 'Comforter' (John 14:16). He is the one whom Christ said he would send back in **His own invisible, unlimited form to** (live) 'in' you and to abide 'with' you forever (John 14:16, 17). You see, God is one God. 'O Israel: The Lord thy God is one Lord' (Deut. 6:4). When we call Him father, Son, and Holy Spirit - the Holy Trinity - we are not saying He is three Gods. He is simply God.... God manifesting Himself as the Father with a specific work to do, as the Son with a specific work to do, and as the Holy Spirit with a specific work to do. As an example, let's take water. It can manifest itself in three ways: as liquid, as ice, or as vapor. But it is still water. The same is true of God. As God loving us, He came to earth as the Son to be born of a woman, to become a human being and to show us what he (God) is like... After Christ divested Himself of His human body by being raised from the dead and ascending back to heaven, He prayed the Father to send the Holy Spirit. **So the Father manifested Himself as the Holy Spirit..** So Holy Spirit is God Himself, without the **limitations of the human body** of Jesus which was limited to time, to space, and to death, as each of us is. To be without these limitations He is now **invisible** (and in us) where they can never crucify Him again. He is also unlimited so that time, space, or death can never touch Him again." (Oral Roberts, Three Most Important Steps to Your Better Health and Miracle Living, p. 54-56).

John MacArthur

"Since being filled with the Spirit and letting the Word of Christ dwell within both produce the same results, a spirit-filled Christian is one in whom the Word of Christ dwells. A Spirit-filled Christian is a Christ-conscious Christian. A **Spirit-filled Christian is consumed with learning everything** he or she can about Jesus and obeying everything that Jesus said. That is what it means to **'let the word of Christ richly dwell within you.'** To be filled with the Spirit is to be totally and richly involved in all there is to know about Jesus Christ." (MacArthur, John, Charismatic Chaos, p. 259, Zondervan).

As you trace the view of the triad of "persons" after the Catholics held councils to defeat those who denied the full Deity of Jesus Christ, they began to elaborate it as three personae but not persons. Some began to adopt the polytheism of the Babylonian triad of Father, Mother and Son. Only in the liberalism of the nineteenth century was God divided into three, co-equal persons. Then it was identified even by liberals as heresy:

Paul Tillich

"There is much gnostic Marcionism in them, that is, a dualistic blasphemy of the Creator God. They put the Savior God in such opposition to the Creator God that, although they never fall into any real heresy, they implicitly blaspheme the divine creation by identifying it with the sinful state of reality. Against this tendency Irenaeus said that God is one; there is no duality in him. Law and gospel, creation and salvation, are derived from the same God." (Tillich, Paul, A History of Christian Thought, p. 42)

"This God is never called a person. The word person was never applied to God in the Middle ages. The reason for this is that the three members of the trinity were called personae (faces or countenances): The Father is persona, the Son is persona, and the Spirit is persona. Persona here means a special characteristic of the divine ground, expressing itself in an independent hypostasis.

"Thus, we can say that it was the nineteenth century which made God into a person, with the result that the greatness of the classical idea of God was destroyed by this way of speaking... but to speak of God as a person would have been heretical for the Middle Ages; it would have been to them a Unitarian heresy, because it would have conflicted with the statement that God has three personae, three expressions of his being. (Tillich, Paul, A History of Christian Thought, p. 190)

Because we are made in the image of God we have a triad nature, but Adam was not created as triplets:

May (1) God himself, the (2) God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of (3) our Lord Jesus Christ. 1Th.5:23

Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: God appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory. 1Ti.3:16

H. Leo Boles and the Gospel Advocate Literature

Every book this writer has examined within churches of Christ are just a re-juggling of Boles views. Boles, in turn, tried to construct tritheism by looking at all of the works said to have been performed by the Holy Ghost and conclude that "He" was a third member of what he calls the "god family" a relationship of kith and kin. Remember that Jesus said that He had spoken in parables from the foundation of the world and still did so to people who evidently have no interest in what Paul called "the word as it has been delivered to you."

The Gospel Advocate literature describes God as three separate gods able to stand side by side and face, to hold conferences, to arrive at decisions and pick the best "person" for a job. Using words almost identical to the modern Presbyterian "Larger Catechism" Boles taught that they are one God only in that they were agreed or united in their effort. A popular shaker and mover has a little joke about how Father and Spirit "aced out" the Son so that He would have to die for mankind! This, too, comes directly out of Philosophy as clearly shown on our Ancient Near Eastern Texts site. One book off the press appeals to the Babylonian "triad" as proof that God is such a family.

"Personality in God is the sum total of the infinite attributes resident in the inmost depth of his one divine nature; the three persons in the Godhead are the three individualities (distinctiveness), the three personal centers of consciousness, the three separate (apart, divided, independent, disconnected, distinct) self-conscious and self-determining (self-deciding) persons or selves. P. 33 (self means appearance, exterior, form like humans)

This belief in three persons is tritheism or polytheism.

"When the **Tritheist** speaks of unity, he is referring only to **unity of purpose**, aim, and endeavor. The trinity of the Godhead is **not a divine partnership** (or family) in which each **personality is a distinct essence**, apart from the agreed unity. The unity exists **within the One eternal essence**. (One person three manifestations 1Ti 3:16).

The Tritheist sect first appeared in the sixth century, and taught that Father, Son, and Spirit were co-equal, distinct Beings, united by one common will and purpose. Turner/Myers, The Godhead, p. 40

"But in God there are not three individuals alongside of, and separate from, one another, but only personal self-distinctions within Divine essence, which is not only generically, but numerically, one. Strong, Systematic Theology, p; 244f. (Armstrong, Tillich and others refuted heresy from 19th century liberalism).