

## **God is Not His Name... It's His Nature**

**by**

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One of the most important doctrines of the Christian faith is the doctrine of God and who He is. At the crux of this is the doctrine of the Trinity. I will be the first to admit that the doctrine of the Trinity is hard to explain. It is impossible to completely comprehend the infinite God, in terms that we as finite beings can understand. However, we are able to see enough to exercise faith, based on what we *can* understand. There are also many who will bring up the fact that the word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible. The word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible but the concept of the "Trinity" is found in many places in the Bible. The basic doctrine of the Trinity is that within the nature of the one true God there are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Let's take a closer look at each of these points. First, what is nature? Webster's dictionary says of the word, "nature: 1) the essential character of a thing; quality or qualities that make something what it is. 2) Inborn character; innate disposition; inherent tendencies of a person." This definition tells us that our nature makes us who we are. The New Testament book of Ephesians 2:3 tells us that before we came to Christ we all lived gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature, because we were by nature objects of wrath. So we sin because it is our nature to do so. Just like if you were to take a prize winning pig, give it a bath, and put a bow around its neck, it would look wonderful. But turn your back on it for a minute and it will run back to its mud hole and jump right in. Why? Because that's the nature of a pig. In Galatians 4:8 we read, "Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods." So we read that there are those who can be treated as though they are God, but by nature they are not God. Who are these false gods we served? Well, your god is whatever takes first place in your life. To some it may be their job, their bank account, or themselves.

In high school I knew a guy whose god was a 53 Mercury coupe. He would wash and wax his god more often than he changed his shirt. My point is that just because we treat something or someone like god, does not mean that they really are God by nature. The reason is very clear, we are sinners by nature, and God is God by nature. We have a different nature than God has.

For years I have heard the question, "If Jesus is God, who was Jesus praying to in the garden?" The answer is Jesus was praying to His father, who by nature is God. When the average person who belongs to a group that rejects the Christian doctrine of the Trinity hears the word *God*, he thinks, Father. The doctrine of the Trinity does not teach that Jesus is the Father. It teaches that Jesus is God. The dictionary's definition, when applied to God, says God is God because that's His nature. In Philippians 2:5-11 we read, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped."

My father's name was Phil, his nature was human. My name is Terry, my nature is also human. If someone were to say, "Terry is human," they would not be saying that I am Phil. They're not talking about my name; they're talking about my nature. Jesus' nature is God. His name is Jesus. In the entire world there are billions of people who are all human, by nature. Their names may be John, Alice, or Kim, but each one of them is human, that's their nature. In the entire universe there are only three "persons" who are God, by nature. Their names are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Their nature is God.

Next we will look at the Bible, which refers to each of these three persons of the Trinity as God. In John 17:1-3 Jesus calls the Father God when we read, "After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: 'Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted Him authority over all people that He might give eternal life to all those you have given Him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.'"

In John 1:1, 14, speaking of the Son, we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was

with God, and the Word was God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

The Holy Spirit is called God in Acts 5:3-4 where we read, “ Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God." These are only a few of the references to the deity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Contrary to the teachings of some groups, however, the Bible does **not** teach that there are three Gods. It plainly says that there is only one God, as we read in Isaiah 44:8, "You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other rock; I know not one." Beside the fact that there is only one God, we also learn that there is none who are even *like* God, when we read 1 Chronicles 17:20, "There is no one like You, O LORD, and there is no God but You, as we have heard with our own ears." Isaiah 43:10, is very plain and to the point when it says, "'You are my witnesses,'" declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am He. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.'"

One group that rejects the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, also known as the Mormons. One of its major doctrines is that God was once a man who lived on an earth much like this one. Through exaltation he became God. That group also teaches that men can also be exalted to godhood just as our Father in Heaven has done, by doing good works and being faithful to Mormon doctrine. This false teaching is plainly refuted in Isaiah 43:10 which we just read. Even with just the basic understanding of what the word nature means, we see this false doctrine for what it is. The verse we read in Ephesians tells us that we have a fallen sinful nature; therefore there is nothing that can be done for us to become gods, because it isn't within our nature, to be God. It is our nature, to be man. In the same way, no matter what we do to that pig we spoke about

earlier to make someone think it isn't a pig, if we just let it loose for a minute its true nature will give it away.

My point is that since the Bible clearly says Jesus is by nature God, as are the Father and Holy Spirit, and there is only one God by nature, the only logical conclusion we can come to is that the three persons are, by nature, the one God. That is just what the Christian doctrine of the Trinity teaches.

As we have shown the Bible clearly shows that God is God by nature, but the Bible also shows that we humans are by nature “children of wrath.” The Bible also teaches that the “good news of the Gospel is that we can be saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and the finished work He completed on the cross of Calvary. As Ephesians 2:1-10 teaches in verse 8-10 “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. We also need to see that the faith is in the finished work of Jesus Christ. That verse says “by grace you have been saved.” That part, “have been saved ” is past tense it’s already done when you put your faith in Christ. So we can see that the good works God expects us to walk in results from being saved. They are what we desire to do out of gratitude for the gift of salvation that we have received by faith. They are not payment to get salvation because as we showed before the words “have been saved” show that it’s already completed once we put our faith in Christ Jesus for our salvation.

**NOTE:** The author is the Director of Proclaiming the Message Ministries and the host of, *Something To Consider*, a program dealing with the cults and Christian doctrine which is heard on seventeen Christian radio stations around the country. This article is free to use if unchanged and copyright is shown. Please let us know when and where the article is used. If you have questions or comments for the author write: [truth@testthespirit.com](mailto:truth@testthespirit.com)

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