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Some examples of how to understand the mystery of the Holy Trinity...

Let's suppose we have a glass of water sitting on the table. If we take some of that water and put it in the freezer, it becomes *ice*. If we take some of that ice and boil it on the stove, it becomes *steam*.

If we put all three of these—*water*, *ice* and *steam*—under a microscope, we would see that they are all still composed of the same substance, two-parts hydrogen and one-part water, or *H2O*.

If something as simple as water can exist in three forms: *water*, *ice* and *steam*—and still remain the *same substance*—why can't the Creator of water—*GOD*—do the same?

Jesus said, “...for with God, all things are possible.” (The Gospel, Mark 10:27)

The Sun:

Think of the sun as the source of all life and being—*God*. Think of the reflection on the water as the “face” of God on earth—*Jesus*. Think of the sunbeam, which connects the sun to the reflection, as the *Holy Spirit*. There you have it, a *trinity* of three forms that are actually *one*. All three forms are real and distinct: if I were to point to the sun, you would see *it*. If I would point to the sunbeam, you would see *it*. If I were to point to the reflection, you would see *it*. And yet, if I remove the sun, all three would disappear because they are all one. God manifests Himself in several forms so our feeble minds could try and understand the superior Being of our awesome God. Truly, God is great!

A Tree:

Another analogy of the trinity is a tree. A tree has roots, a stem and a crown, all distinct yet belonging to a single tree.

Snow, Ice, Lake:

It is a bit of a mystery of us trying to comprehend how Jesus as God is "here" but also "there". But then again, how can water be in a lake and ice be on the tree and snowflakes be falling on them both at the same time, and yet they being made of the same substance (H₂O)? And yet, we know this is possible...

Unfortunately, the above examples do not fully explain the magnificence and complexity of the *Holy Trinity*. In fact, the *Holy Trinity* is one of the hardest concepts for our minds to understand. My head hurts trying to figure out how it is possible. The superiority of God's abilities and intellect remain a mystery to my feeble mind.

And yet, Jesus tells us repeatedly in the Gospel that God exists in three dimensions. There is *God the Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*. Three distinct beings, all from one divine substance, and yet Jesus did not speak of "three" gods, but *one true God*.¹

And Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." (The Gospel, Mark 12:29-30)

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (The Gospel, John 17:1-3)

Since Jesus professed there is only one true God, then why do Christians believe Jesus and the Holy Spirit of God are the same Divine substance of God?

Because God said so!

The Holy Spirit of God is mentioned numerous times throughout the Old and New Testaments. Jews and Christians have always believed God has a Spirit which He commands to do His will. God sends forth His Holy Spirit to speak through His prophets and perform great works. Jesus spoke of his relationship with God the Father and the Holy Spirit (Ghost) throughout his teachings:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. (The Old Testament, Genesis 1:1-2)²

1. See also, "The Nicene Creed" which is the Christian profession of belief and faith that there is only one true God. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11049a.htm>

2. For more references of the Holy Spirit of God, please see: Genesis 41:38, Numbers 24:2, 1 Samuel 10:10, 1 Samuel 11:6, 1 Samuel 19:20, 1 Samuel 19:23, 2 Chron. 15:1, 2 Chron. 24:20, Job 27:3, Job 33:4, Ezekiel 11:24, Matthew 3:16, Matthew 12:28, Romans 8:9, Romans 8:14, Romans 15:19, 1 Cor. 2:11, 1 Cor. 2:14, 1 Cor. 3:16, 1 Cor. 7:40, 1 Cor. 12:3, Ephes. 4:30, 1 John 4:2)

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. (The Gospel, Matthew 1:20)

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (The Gospel, Matthew 3:16-17)

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, "Arise, and be not afraid." And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. (The Gospel, Matthew 17:5-8)

Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." (The Gospel, John 10:30)

Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (The Gospel, John 3:16)

Jesus said, "But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." (The Gospel, John 10:38)

Jesus said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (The Gospel, John 14:26)

Jesus said, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:" (The Gospel, John 15:26)

Jesus said, "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." (The Gospel, Matthew 12:28)

Jesus said, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (Spirit) shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." (The Gospel, Matthew 12:31-32)

Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" (The Gospel, Matthew 28:19)

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (The New Testament, Romans 8:12-17)

It can be difficult for our human minds to understand how God can manifest Himself in three forms and still remain one Being. However, God does not expect us to fully understand the greatness of His abilities, but He does expect us to obey and believe in His greatness!

“One in substance, distinct in relationship” like "man," "father," "brother..."

“Man”, “father”, “brother” are biologically the same human (same substance) yet three distinct persons in their function in the world

Father and Son are same *nature*, same power, same love

As such, the Father and the Son share in the same nature. This nature includes the same omnipotence, omniscience and love. Jesus acknowledges this himself when he says in John's record of the Gospel, "All that the Father has is mine..." (Jn. 16:15).

The "Word" (logos) images Jesus as being One with the Father. As John's record of the Gospel states, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 he was in the beginning with God..." (John 1:1-2). *The Word* images Jesus with the Father in two ways: 1) it reveals how the mind of the Father and the mind of the Son are totally in-sync. There is perfect harmony in their understanding of knowledge, and their application of it; and 2) what the Father expresses interiorly, the Son expresses exteriorly and is the perfect expression of the Father's wisdom, power and love. Simply put, Jesus is the "visible image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15).

"Marriage" is an icon of the Holy Trinity. It is a "triangle" of love...

TRIANGLE of LOVE: Outpouring, emptying of LOVE from FATHER to SON, SON to FATHER. Need 2 people to LOVE, otherwise it's SELF-LOVE (narcissism). The exchange of EMOTION, AFFECTION, LOVE between the TWO is the HOLY SPIRIT connecting the FATHER and the SON. When two people love each other deeply, they are no longer 2 but 1. When they have a child, they are no longer 2 as 1, but 3 as 1. They love each other so much they cannot bear to live apart from each other. When one gets hurt, the other feels the pain. Husbands and wives experience this spiritual connection. Parents and children experience this spiritual connection as well.

The phrase "Holy Trinity" is not found in the Bible. Why?

The word “Trinity” does not appear anywhere in the Bible. However, there is overwhelming evidence of all three “Beings” of the Holy Trinity (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) existing. The word “Trinity” is simply the word that Christians use to try and describe the relationship between “The Father, Son and Holy Spirit

(Ghost)". And just because someone may not be able to explain, or comprehend how the Trinity can exist, this doesn't mean the Trinity does not exist.

God makes it very clear throughout the Bible that each Being of the Holy Trinity does exist. Who are we to question the authority and teaching of God? Devout Christians recognize the greatness of God—*and whether we understand or not*—His teaching is the law by which we try and live our lives.

However, to help us better understand the nature of the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, lets think of the relationships within our own family. Think of the Holy Spirit as the *love* that is shared between you and your children, your father and mother, or your sister or brother.

Every person has an emotional connection with members in their family. Parents not only have an emotional connection with their children, but a physical one as well. A child is conceived from both parents and then formed in the mother's womb. The child is then born into this world in the parent's "image". This is how "parent and child" are emotionally and physically connected as "one".

Every parent also has a spiritual connection with his or her child. This spiritual connection comes from the *love* parents have for their child. *Love*, is how "parent and child" are spiritually connected as "one".

The spiritual connection, or *love*, between parents and children is so strong that when a child is physically or emotionally hurt—or happy—the parent can literally feel their child's pain or joy.

The *love* a parent has for their child; and the *love* a child has for their parent forms a "spiritual triangle" or "trinity". This spiritual connection makes them "one". In the same way, the connection God has with His Son through His Love (the Holy Spirit) forms the "Holy Trinity" and makes God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit—"One."

The power and authority of Jesus—a Royal Family

Another way to understand the relationship of the Holy Trinity is to think of the lineage of a royal family. The King of the family has all authority over all his people. And if the King were to venture outside his castle to visit his people, everyone would bow down before him and listen, and do, whatever the King commanded them to do.

Now if the son of the King, the Prince, were to venture outside of his father's castle, the people upon seeing the Prince would treat the Prince in the same manner as the King. Without question, they would recognize his authority because the Prince comes from the King's own flesh and blood. The people would

honor the Prince (Son), just as they would honor the King (Father). And they would do whatever the Prince commanded them to do, especially if the King (Father) told his people to listen to His Son:

And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. (The Gospel, Luke 9:35)

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (The Gospel, Matthew 3:17)

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust. (The Gospel, Matthew 12:17-21)

However, when it comes to who has greater authority between the King (Father) and the Prince (Son), the final authority and honor would, of course, be given to the King. This is why Jesus made it clear to his followers that he was not above God's authority when he said, "...for my Father is greater than I." (John 14:28)

Now that we have a better understanding of the lineage of power and authority in a family, lets read how Jesus exercised this authority:

And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men. (The Gospel, Matthew 9:4-8)

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I

have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." (The Gospel, John 5:19-38)

Jesus proclaimed there is only One True God and yet, he came out from God.

It is a mystery to our minds how this can be. And yet, God said it, so we believe it, and that settles it! This may be why Jesus kept telling his followers, "just believe in me..." Jesus knew our minds could not comprehend the greatness of God, but he still encouraged us to believe how great God is!

Jesus said: "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." [17:1] These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous

Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” (The Gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded by, John 16:27-17:26)

Further, to fulfill exactly what Jesus foretold concerning the Comforter and His relationship with the disciples, the New Testament records the fulfillment of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the disciples receiving Him. The disciples received the Comforter - the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:3, 4:

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (The New Testament, Acts 2:2-4)

The Comforter was now “in” the disciples and He remained “in” them from then on and taught them — just as Jesus had said He would.

Christians profess there is only one God

Christianity teaches there is only one God. The “Nicene Creed” is the most widely accepted statement describing the beliefs of the Christian faith. It is professed in the vast majority of Christian churches worldwide including Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and many other Protestant churches.

The Nicene Creed begins with this line: *“We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.”* The Nicene Creed continues on to say that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are “one being” with God.

The Nicene Creed:

“I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man: Who for us, too, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, suffered, and was buried: the third day He rose according to the Scriptures, ascended into heaven, and is seated on the right hand of the Father: He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son: Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified: Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe one holy, Christian, and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and life of the age to come. Amen.”

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11049a.htm>

