



The Trinity: February 15, 2018

Verses Covered This Week

2 Corinthians 13:14

Psalms 139: 1 – 10, 13 - 16

John 14:7 – 9

John 8:58 – 59

John 1:1 – 3

Matthew 3:16 – 17 & 4:1

Ephesians 4:30

Acts 13:2

Matthew 24:36

John 4:3 – 6

John 17:1 – 5

Philippians 2:4 – 9

There are two types of cults in America. There are extremist cults, they do the brainwashing and that does go on. There are the non-extremist cults which don't brainwash but will come into your house and argue you away from Christianity; that's the Mormons, Jehovah's Witness. David Koresh, of the Branch Davidians, was an extremist cult. What percentage of the mainline cults' members do they get from mainline churches? 75%. Because what they'll do is come in and pull you away from the Trinity. The definition of a cult is a group that always denies the deity of Christ and they deny the deity and the personality of the Holy Spirit. They'll deny both of those. So what we're going to do today, I'm going to walk you through real quickly a little bit of an understanding of the Trinity. To say that I understand the Trinity would be a complete lie. I don't. It is taught in scripture; it's subtly taught in scripture. The word never appears, but we do find it, for example, you look at Ephesians 1:3 – 14, same phrase, under the praise of His glory, after it talks about God the Father choosing to redeem us, God the Son accomplishing that redemption, God the Holy Spirit applying that redemption. You have this praise to the Trinity. Remember, Jesus said that you baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit because they are co-eternal, co-equal. You have to get that down.

What I'm going to do is walk you through how they are and then I'm going to be a Jehovah's Witness today and I'm going to argue you out of what you believe. I'm going to show you what's going to happen when they come into the house. I have learned a great trick with them. I discovered it in seminary. These Jehovah's Witnesses came to the house and, now I just tell them

to move on next door, but when they came to the house, I'm in seminary and so I want to argue, because that's all you do in seminary. So these guys came to the house and they said something about the Greek and I said, "Hang on a second." This is my favorite moment of life. I gave them my Greek New Testament. So they said, "Ok, fine." And so they open it up and they get this puzzled look on their face. And this guy goes, "There's no English." I said, "Hence the word Greek testament." And so when they couldn't read it, they left.

Now part of the problem with dealing with the Trinity is when you come to Genesis 1 and John 1; Genesis 1, let Us make man in Our image. So the Trinity creates. You have the statement in John 1 that there wasn't a single thing created that Jesus didn't create. So in other words when you see the Trinity in its creative aspect, they're all involved. You don't have God the Father creating the water, God the Son creating the land, God the Spirit creating animals. But when you come to redemption, you have a total change. You have God the Father choosing to redeem us. As a matter of fact look at 2 Corinthians 13:14. Now listen to what it says.

¹⁴The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

It is true you have God's love that motivates our redemption. You have the grace of Jesus Christ. Grace is not a feeling God has about you, it's an act He performed on the cross. Then the fellowship of the Spirit is when you have Romans 8. His Spirit bears witness with our Spirit that we're the children of God. So you have a different thing in redemption. God the Father has a particular role. God the Son has a particular role. God the Spirit has a particular role. This is why when you try to study this in the scripture, it gets immensely confusing. If God the Father doesn't choose to redeem us, God the Son doesn't go to the cross, the Holy Spirit doesn't arrive. If God the Father chooses to redeem us, but God the Son decides not to go to the cross, which was His option, then we have no redemption, and the Holy Spirit doesn't arrive. If God the Father chooses to redeem us, God the Son goes, but God the Spirit does not convict, it's of no benefit to you because you can't be saved. So you have a distinct difference. They divide roles in redemption, but they are identical in creation. Which is why when we go to heaven, I think we're going to see a different ball game than what you see in redemption. So at any rate there is that distinction that you really have to pay attention to.

Let me show you as best we can, real quickly, now there are a ton of scripture obviously, I'm going to hit some real fast today. Go to Psalm 139. This is going to give you the characteristics of God. There are three characteristics of God. Psalm 139:1 – 6.

¹O Lord, You have searched me and know me. ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You discern my thoughts from afar. ³You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O Lord, You know it all. ⁵You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high; I cannot attain to it.

He says exactly what you're going to say, before you say it. First thing Psalm 139 teaches you is God is omniscient; that is, He is all-knowing. There's nothing He does not know. Now this is

going to be critical in a moment because this is how they're going to come in and pull you out. Look in verses 7 – 10 of Psalm 139.

⁷Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Where shall I flee from Your presence? ⁸If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. ⁹If I take the wings of the morning, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, You are there. ¹⁰Even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me.

So He's ever-present. There is nowhere you can go that He is not. And then you have the third aspect. Look in verses 13 – 16 of Psalm 139.

¹³For You formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it all very well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; ¹⁶Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.

He's all powerful. He can do anything. So you have three things here that are really the three defining statements about God. He knows everything. He is everywhere. He can do everything. If you don't exhibit these three, you're not God. The angels are not this way. The demons are not this way. We, in the image of God, are not this way. Even before the fall, we were not this way. So these are the three characteristics of God. You have to have all three of these to be able to be considered God.

Now walk with me. We're going to fly quickly today. We're going to look at Jesus' claims. Now Jesus is God. Now we're going to look at a few places where He absolutely declares that. Go to John 14:7 – 9.

⁷If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you do know Him, and have seen Him." ⁸Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

So you have this clear statement. And then look in John 8:58. We're going to go a little backwards here. Listen to Jesus. This is a significant statement.

⁵⁸Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

Now He makes two statements. In the Greek, if you say, just *eimí*, this is *eimí* in the Greek: εἰμί. It means I am. If you put this in front of it, *egō*, it means I, I alone, Am. Remember when Moses said to God, "If you want me to go to Israel, what is Your name?" He said, "You tell them I Am is calling them out." Jesus says, "Before Abraham, I Am." It's one of the clearest statements of His identity with the Father that's ever been put down. And then if you look at the Jews, look in verse 59:

⁵⁹So they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

They're correct. If He's blaspheming, they should have stone Him. That's Old Testament law. And He is blaspheming if He's not God. He just said He's older than Abraham. That's problematic in and of itself. If someone comes to you and says, "They're older than Abraham." You probably need to move away from that church. He says, "He's older than Abraham." And then he uses the word God uses for Himself. He uses God's name to identify Himself. "I'm older than Abraham and I Am God." So He clearly is identifying Himself as God.

Now there are several other passages we don't have time to go into. John 1:1 – 3 is one of the greatest passages about Jesus' deity. Without Him nothing has been created. He is the Creator. Only two beings in the universe: Creator and created. So we clearly have these statements that Jesus is God.

Now when you come to the Holy Spirit, they're going to deny two things. They're going to say the Holy Spirit is not God and they're going to say that He is not a person. Go to Matthew 3:16.

¹⁶When Jesus was baptized, immediately went up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and resting on Him, ¹⁷and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." ¹Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

How does this prove that the Holy Spirit is God? How does it prove that? If the Holy Spirit is not God, then Jesus just sinned because He was allowed to be led by a being that isn't God. He spent His life in submission to the Father. So if the Holy Spirit is not God and Jesus followed the Holy Spirit's leadership into the wilderness, He obeyed a being that is not His Father. In which case He sinned and is no longer capable of your redemption. So the Holy Spirit is God.

Now we don't have time to go there, but Ephesians 4:30.

³⁰Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Acts 13:2 says the Holy Spirit spoke to the church.

²While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

So you have a person that can grieve and that can speak and that directs Jesus Christ. So He's directed in His life by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can feel grief. The Holy Spirit can speak. So He is clearly God. He is also a person obviously. So when the cults come in your house and say, "He's really just a force and He's not God." You do have Biblical basis for both Jesus being God and the Holy Spirit being God.

Now here's what we're going to do. I'm going to come into your house and I am going to walk you through some scriptures here. Go first to Matthew 24:36. Now Jesus is talking about His return. He says:

³⁶“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.”

So Jesus does not know when He comes back. He does not know His return. So He's not omniscient. Remember you've got to be omniscient to be God. He said, He didn't know when He was coming back. So He's not omniscient. Look in John 4:3. Simple little statement. It says:

³He left Judea and departed again into Galilea. ⁴And He had to pass through Samaria. ⁵So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar,

So He left one area and went into another area because He's not omnipresent. He can only be in one place at a time. So He is not the second characteristic of the Father. Then look at John 4:6. Listen to what he says.

⁶Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, wearied as He was from His journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

He is tired. He can't walk any further, so He is not all powerful. So you have three things that are true about Jesus in the New Testament that prove He cannot be God. And this is what they're going to do. They're going to come in your house and tell you, “He's not omniscient. He's not omnipresent. He's not omnipotent.” And then they're going to take you to John 17:1 – 5. It's the prayer of Christ. Really this is the Lord's prayer. Not Matthew. That's the model prayer. This is the Lord's prayer. It's the prayer He actually prayed at the end of His life. Now listen to what He says.

¹When Jesus had spoken these words, He lifted up His eyes to heaven and He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, ²since you've given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all to whom You've given Him.

John 17, He says, “Grant me Your glory.” Now if He is God, why does He have to ask for God's glory? If He's God, He should already possess that glory. And yet right before He dies, He begs God for God's glory that He obviously does not possess. So if I come into your house and you tell me, and I sit down and I say, “What are the three characteristics of God?” And you say, “Boom, boom, boom.” And I take you to these scriptures: He does not know when He's coming back, He is not omnipresent, and He gets tired so He's not omnipotent. And He doesn't even possess the glory of God and yet you tell me He's God. Now how do you answer that?

Slide over to Philippians 2:4 – 9. When He was baptized, what was the point of that? It wasn't washing away sin. So what was the point? What happens when you're really baptized? If I hold you under long enough what happens? You drown. Baptism's always a picture of me dying to something. Jesus was baptized and He made the weird statement. He said, “Let it be for now,

we're going to fulfil all righteousness." Jesus is going to die with two kinds of righteousness, right. He's going to die with the righteousness as the deity and as man. Now look at Philippians 2. Listen to what it says:

⁴let each of you look not to only his own interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, although He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸Being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore, God has highly exalted Him,

Now he makes an interesting statement. He says, "Jesus did not consider His equality with God as something to be grasped." It's a weird Greek word: robbery. The King James Version uses the word robbery because that's real close to the word. It's actually a Greek word is not the act of robbery. The Greek word is actually when you go in the house, and you find something and you steal it. What you steal is the Greek word. So here's what he says.

He does not consider equality with God as something that was stolen.

He is God, but He emptied Himself taking on the form of a man. Now when He emptied Himself it doesn't mean that He quit being God. What He did do, and this is particularly the point in the baptism, that at this point at age 30, and He's done it before obviously, but He's forecasting that He's going to die, He's going to drown, not to being God, but to living the life here as God. So He's going to choose not to know His return. He's going to make a choice in the flesh to not to be omnipresent. He's going to make a choice in the flesh not to be omnipotent because there are two things He has to do to redeem us. He has to die and He has to be tempted in every way like we are. The Bible says in James; God cannot be tempted. And the Bible says God can't die. So the only way for Jesus to be tempted and to die, is to become a man. He doesn't cease being God, but He lives the life here just like Adam and Eve were meant to live it. He chooses that life and He lives it under the direction of the Holy Spirit, under the direction of the Word of God. That's what you see in Matthew 4; the Spirit takes Him in the wilderness. He quotes the word of God to Satan; He lives under that. So He lives under the Holy Spirit and the word and in doing that, He chose not to be these things so that He could bring our redemption. Now a Jehovah's Witness, Mormons, will just pull these out, particularly this one, and just absolutely ruin a Baptists day. And what happens with both Baptists, they don't know how to answer this, and so one of three things happens:

1. If they really pursue the scripture, they'll study this and figure it out.
2. If they don't, they'll join a cult, or
3. They will fade out in their Christianity because they begin to doubt about who Jesus Christ is.

So you have to keep a firm set on the fact that Jesus is God, but He chose not to utilize the fact that He was God in the way He lived here. That's why, by the way, I used to always struggle who say, "Well, you need to live like Jesus." And my response was, "You can't. He's God." But He didn't do anything here as God. Even His miracles, remember He says, "What I judge, I judge

correctly because I hear from the Father.” Every miracle He did was a directive from the Holy Spirit in His life. He lived a perfect life under the control and domain of the Holy Spirit. That’s why in Mark 4, when He’s asleep in the boat, He’s asleep because the Holy Spirit put Him in there, God brought the storm, He’s not worried at all because He’s living under the direction of the Spirit. He knows He can’t die until He comes to the cross.

So you’ve got to lock this away in your life. And you need to lock it particularly in the lives of those that I’m going to make you disciple. Because this is where the cults get us. We do believe in one God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit. We see it all through the scripture. Jesus does not exemplify deity characteristics even though He is God because He did not use His equality with God. He lived as a man in dependence on the Father; exactly as you and I are to do.

So if you can lock that down, then you get it and then go back to John 17, the Lord’s prayer, and listen to what He does pray after He says, “Give me Your glory.” Listen to verses 4 and 5.

⁴I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave Me to do. ⁵And now, Father, glorify Me in Your own presence, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed.

The only way to have the glory of God before the world existed is if you are in fact God. So He left that glory, He displaced it, He wouldn’t live in it, and then at the end he says, “God give me back that glory.” Which He does when He goes back to heaven, takes the thief on the cross with Him, and He steps back into His glory and He’s never had to live this since.

So you’ve got to lock the Trinity down because the cults are out there. There’s an extremist cult that’s been operating for a number of years at Texas A&M, they’re grabbing college students, particularly ones that seem alone, and at this big of a campus, you’re going to have a ton of kids like that, and they pull them in. They were operating, I can’t remember where it was, a couple of people brought it to my attention, we checked out the website. They’re about an hour and a half from here. I can’t remember where they are or what their name is. But there’s a bunch of stuff out there and most Christians can’t answer this. You want to make sure you understand as best you can. There’s no way I would tell I understand the Trinity. One God in three persons. I’ve always heard the illustration where you have three glasses of water. They’re all identical, but they’re all separate. But even that breaks down on some levels. I don’t understand the Trinity. It doesn’t bother me because I don’t understand my own nature: spirit, soul, and body. So if I don’t understand my own, it’s not going to bother me that I don’t understand God’s. He’s way beyond me. I’m not sure I’ll understand it there. I think I’ll acknowledge it and see it in a form that I don’t get here, but I don’t even know if I’ll acknowledge and grasp it there. It’s a difficult concept, but it’s why Satan goes after us on the difficult concepts. But it’s parlayed throughout all of scripture. You’ve got all these different places. You’ve got all these subtle references. You’ve got the statement in 1 Corinthians 11 about God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit in relation to our gifts. There are all sorts of interesting places. The fact that Jesus makes us baptize with that. I’ve had a guy say to me recently, “I just want you to use the name of Jesus when you baptize me.” I said, “I can’t do that because Jesus isn’t enough.” Unless God the Father decides to send

Him and unless the Holy Spirit convicted you about Jesus, you can't be a believer. So the Trinitarian concept is extremely important to who we are in Christ and you need to lock that down.

Questions

Q. Do Mormons believe that there was a necessary sacrifice? Because explaining the Trinity and the fact that Jesus had to die on the cross as a sacrifice to be accepted there needed to be some kind of....

A. The Mormons will argue sacrifice. They'll say, they'll use your code words. They'll say, "Yes, Jesus died on the cross."

Do you know who Jesus is in Mormon theology? Adam became a god, had sex with Mary, and produced Jesus. Most Mormons have no idea about that because they just go to the church out of community. No Mormon church, for example, has a pastor. You just go to community church, you hang out with people, you base friends, they say, "Yes, I believe in the blood of Jesus." But then when you get into the very essence of Mormonism, you get into these bizarre beliefs. Especially if you're a woman you don't want to be a Mormon. You know what your ending is in Mormon life? You have a planet and you're perpetually pregnant.

There's a scripture in Psalms that says, to whom the word of God came, they became gods. They believe everyone ultimately becomes a god. That's why you get a planet, you become a god, and their basis is that Adam became a god, he had sex with Mary, and that's what produced Jesus. In Mormonism, God and Satan are half-brothers. But you don't get that stuff until after they've come into your house and convinced you that what you believe is wrong and then they pull you into Mormon doctrine.

Q. It impacts me if I think that Jesus made a daily choice to not be God. Do you think He made it one time or was it a daily thing?

A. No, I'd go even past that. I think Jesus made a moment by moment choice not to use His deity. I think that's how He was tempted. He's tempted like we are. We're tempted to try to be God, He's tempted to step away from being God. So it's an interesting deal, but I think absolutely it was moment by moment. I think He had to live, because for one thing, if you notice in the New Testament, it's a great reminder of how Satan works with us. He comes to Jesus and he leaves. He comes to Jesus and he leaves. Which is exactly what he does with us. Although I believe demons were assigned to Him even at that point. But, yeah, I think it was a moment by moment decision He had to make every single day when He got up. Which makes you begin to understand the depth of His sacrifice. It wasn't just what He did on the cross. It was what He did every single day. And if you're God, and you have to come live in this and limit yourself like He did and choose that, that's unbelievable. It's one of those things. You begin to understand His love when you get there.

Q. If the Jews don't believe, I know there are some that don't and some that do, did not believe that Jesus is who He says He was, the Messiah. I know it's because they don't believe in the New Testament. Is that right?

A. No, they believe in it now, because they're making money off of it. No, here's the deal. Our guide that is a believer, his brother that drives the bus for us is not. His Father is not who was our first guide. And so our people asked him, you take my people on a trip, they're going to pound these poor Jewish guides. And I'm sure that's true for every church. But his reason for not coming to Christ; he believed that He died, believed He was resurrected, believed in the blood, but He can't believe this. He said he cannot believe that Jesus is God. He cannot go there. And when you can't go there, you can't be redeemed because He's not big enough to redeem you.

He knows the scripture backwards and forwards. In Israel you go to a school to guide. And they walk you through all sorts of Old Testament prophecy. We asked our guide why he did come to Christ and he said, "After studying it, it just seems obvious." But his father can't do that. But his father's a different generation of a Israeli too. So Yuval told us that he thinks that Jews are starting to make a move toward Christ. He's seeing a number do that. So it's a different day.

Q. So when Jesus knew the Samaritan woman who'd been married five times. Was that the Holy Spirit telling Him?

A. Absolutely. When He knew, John 6, the Samaritan woman had been married five times, that was the Holy Spirit revealing that to Him. If we were to walk perfectly in the Holy Spirit, which we can't, if we were, we'd know all that stuff. So absolutely. He knew what people were thinking because the Holy Spirit revealed it to Him moment by moment.

Q. I assume that is why the apostles were able to miracles because they were walking so closely to Jesus.

A. It's the reason Jesus made the statement, "You'll do greater than I've done." Because it wasn't based on His deity. It was based on humanity lived in perfection with God. He's what Adam should have been.

Q. So what is your thought about someone who was raised a Christian and then converts to Judaism? I know some modern Jews believe in Jesus and I know some don't. Do you think how you said last week they never had their Christianity?

A. That's a really good question. If you walked as a Christian and all of a sudden you became Jewish. It's hard for me to answer what's inside a person's heart. I think for some people it's trendy to be Jewish now. It's hard to know. I think about Ivanka Trump, Jared's Jewish and she's embraced that. There are some Christians that do it. It may, in fact, be the argument behind the entire book of Hebrews. That you have a group of Jewish priests who met Christ, but they've gone back to Judaism and so the writer of Hebrews is, as a matter of fact, there's an argument that Hebrews is just a sermon. And he's desperately trying to

pull them back. Because his whole argument is Jesus is better than angels, better than Moses, better than the priests, and better than the covenant. That's the entire book of Hebrews in a nutshell. And so the argument is these Jewish priests have gone back. But then you have these weird warning passages in there with each one of those four things. You have four warning passages that basically say, "You go back, you're headed for problems." So I don't know how to answer that. I think there may be somebody that really is a believer and just is going to be trendy, but my belief would be, and in time the Holy Spirit in them would grieve them enough, they would feel enough of His grief that they would go, "This is not right." And slide back.

Q. You can embrace Judaism, but you can't ever become a Jew unless it's blood, right?

A. Yeah, technically. You can become Jewish, but not an Israeli. You can be considered a Jew, but not a blood lineage. That's correct, but you have to be circumcised. In the New Testament you have the weird little phrase, "God fearer." You find that in the New Testament. There were people that had embraced Judaism, but didn't want to be circumcised. But wanted to embrace the idea of one God. Instead of 100 gods, they had to wonder who was mad at them that day.