

A Scholarly Debate on the Supreme Deity of God the Father

An Online Written Debate
Conducted Between
August 17, 2010 and October 2, 2010

Resolved: *The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
is alone God Almighty*

Affirm: Danny André Dixon, B.A., M.A., M.Ed.

Deny: Marc Taylor, B.A., M.A.

This debate includes opponents' arguments as well as written comments by original post readers at the Strict Monotheistic KingdomReady blogsite:

<http://kingdomready.org/blog/2010/08/13/announcing-a-trinity-debate/>

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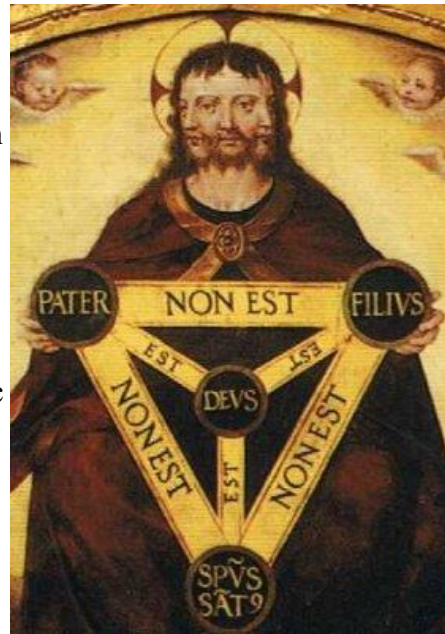
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Announcing a Trinity Debate

August 13th, 2010 by Sean Finnegan

Who is God? Is there any other question more important than this? Is God a singular individual or a multi-personal being? Has the Church been duped into settling for a philosophically sophisticated substitute in the place of the simple God of Judaism? Should Jesus be worshiped and if so how? Is the Holy Spirit a distinct person or is it/he just a way of talking about God's presence in the world. These questions and many more demand satisfying and cogent biblical answers. To that end kingdomready.org is hosting a written debate between Danny Andre' Dixon and Marc Taylor. Each entry will be 1500 words or less posted each Tuesday and Saturday between August 17th and October 2nd. Everyone is welcome to participate in this debate by leaving comments on each post. We cannot guarantee that Mr. Taylor or Mr. Dixon will read your comments, but they very well may, depending on how many comments are made and how busy they are preparing for their next post. Please be sure to follow our Communication Policy when making comments.



Marc Taylor graduated from Sacred Heart University with a B. A. in Political Science and from Southwest Bible College and Seminary earning an M. A. in Christian Education. He has taught English as a Second Language in Japan, South Korea and in the Philippines where he currently resides. Marc is a member of the Bereans Apologetics Research Ministry where he has debated Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, etc. Marc participated in another written debate with strict monotheistic Danny Dixon on the Christian Apologetics Research Ministry (from June-October 2006). Click [here](#) to read a transcript of the debate in its entirety.



Danny Andre' Dixon is a Graduate of Abilene Christian University (B.A. Biblical Studies, M.A. Bible and Related Studies) and of Grand Canyon University (M.Ed. Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). He has served churches as a youth minister in Las Vegas, Nevada; a campus minister in Blacksburg, VA to students at Virginia Tech, in St. Louis, MO to students at The University of Missouri at St. Louis (a college ministry of a city-wide church planting effort), and in Los Angeles to students at UCLA, USC, and Santa Monica College. He is author of four books: *Discipling Ministries: An Inside Look* (1987), *Essential Christian Baptism* (1990), *Standing to Change/Changing to Stand* (1993), and *Baptism: Which One*

Did You Receive (1996). Danny has participated in two previous panel debates on topics related to the oneness of God: Trinity Truth or Tragedy with members of the Evangelical Debate Society (2005 and 2006). Danny has participated in three summer evangelistic mission efforts in off-hours of a 9 a.m.-12:00 noon Teaching English as a Second Language effort in Novgorod, Russia (2007, 2008) and in Astana, Kazakhstan (2009). Danny is presently a high school teacher of 10th and 12th grade English Language Arts in Fort Stockton Independent School District in Fort Stockton, TX, from which base he also directs a teen discipleship ministry DFOG, Disciples For One God–Clarifying Teen Discipleship, a ministry of HungerTruth Christian Educational Ministries. He has been moderator of the Yahoo Discussion Group Disciples For One God since 2003.

Please help us publicize this debate by posting this link on other blogs and message boards: <http://kingdomready.org/blog/2010/08/13/announcing-a-trinity-debate/>

Contents

24 Responses to “Announcing a Trinity Debate”

1. *on 13 Aug 2010 at 1:58 pm*¹ Nick Norelli

This is a much better format than the “Great Trinity Debate” between Rob Bowman and Dave Burke. Thanks for pointing this out to me.

2. *on 14 Aug 2010 at 9:43 am*² Danny André Dixon

Setting up a format that promotes fairness and that also engages the readership is always a challenge. The 1500 word limit is really a challenge to the debaters to get to the point in laying out each respective case.

I am a schoolteacher right now with a full teaching schedule from roughly 8 a.m. To 4 p.m. I will also be assisting the tennis team at our high school (although I am not the head coach). In addition, I coach the debate team for the school. Adding to all of that my daily lesson plans and grading assignments makes participation in this debate all the more challenging.

I am not sure if we are allowed by Sean to respond to comments that readers make. If we as the formal debaters ARE allowed to do so, exercising the prerogative to do so would make this a truly unique event.

–D.A.D.

3. *on 14 Aug 2010 at 4:37 pm*³ Sean

I am not sure if we are allowed by Sean to respond to comments that readers make. If we as the formal debaters ARE allowed to do so, exercising the prerogative to do so would make this a truly unique event.

You and Marc are certainly free to engage with any comments that are made on this blog.

4. *on 15 Aug 2010 at 1:52 am*⁴ Joseph

Shalom Danny, looking forward to your exchange!

5. *on 15 Aug 2010 at 5:50 pm*⁵ Danny André Dixon

Joseph, do I know you from C.A.R.M. As long ago as 2006?

6. *on 15 Aug 2010 at 8:20 pm6 Ray*

Sean,

I find the picture interesting. It reminds me of a diagram I once drew on paper which came about by thinking about how some trinitarians seem to think about what they call the Trinity. It was drawn by considering what it is that many of them have said and also putting in it what we learn from scripture.

The views seem to be in conflict for when one read on the outside it was contrary to what one reads while following the paths on the inside of the triangle.

I don't read Latin or Greek, or whatever it is in the picture.

Would someone please interpret the words in the picture?

I think I know what the words are saying but don't know which word corresponds to which word in English.

Isn't it like saying a Ford is not a Chevy, a Chevy is not a Plymouth, a Plymouth is not a Ford, when we read the paths on the outside, and then on the inside we read something like, a Ford is a car, a Chevy is a car, a Plymouth is a car.

Now we know that there is no such thing on this planet as one car.

I suppose we could say that Jesus is distinct from the Father, but there is a sense in which Jesus is God and that sense is because he is as God is, sharing the same character and nature of the one true God. Jesus may be called a God, because among the gods, (those who have received the word of God -Psalm 82, Jesus is the greatest and deserving of a capital "G", which is not in contradiction to the fact that there is only one God.

But without the help of a good interpretation, the picture is confusing. It could be interpreted rightly and the interpretation be wrong because the picture is wrong, or I suppose we could interpret it in some kind of way that is slightly different than the actual picture and I suppose the result of the interpretation could be correct.

So I don't know if the picture is a good representation of the truth or not. I trust I can say that without a good interpretation it is at least without value, and if it has no good interpretation it is useless.

If we could interpret it with just and right words we could put them in, though we might need a larger picture and have to write smaller. Yet, if we did, it might be

useful for the work of the kingdom of heaven, to help poor pilgrims along their way.

7. *on 15 Aug 2010 at 8:42 pm* Ray

The picture reminds me of a car I saw recently at a custom car show.

The car was called a "789". It was a custom build on a Corvette chassis. The body parts were made of carbon fiber. The front was a replica of a '57 Chev Bel Air, the middle of a '58 Chev (like the white one on American Graffiti) and the rear part was of a '59 Chev, the kind with the laid down fins.

The people that make them have made quite a few of them and may be making more. Lots of people at the show liked it. I liked it too. But that doesn't mean everybody has to like it.

It wasn't required at the show that everybody like it in order to attend the show. We didn't stand together and recite any kind of creed about it. It was just there. It was there because some artist and car enthusiast built it. I suppose it's what he imagined when he put it together.

But there was no book that I know of that required him to do it. There was not book that told him how to do it before he imagined it. I wonder if anyone ordered him to do it. Maybe he did it to please somebody. Maybe somebody wanted a car like that so they came to him.

I wonder if that picture is what God wanted. I wonder if he said, "This is a perfect picture of me." I wonder if he told someone do do it and see what comes of it.

I don't think it's for everybody. Not everyone has to agree with the picture in my opinion. Some might like it and others may not.

That's my opinion.

8. *on 17 Aug 2010 at 12:55 am* Joseph

Danny,

Joseph, do I know you from C.A.R.M. As long ago as 2006?

No, we met when I confronted you a couple years ago about if I could add Hebrew subtitles to the 'Human Jesus Documentary.'

Get a hold of me... josephvardit@yahoo.com

9. *on 17 Aug 2010 at 6:18 am*9 Jaco

Ray,

I think you understand the picture correctly. It's a graphical depiction of classical Trinitarianism. It also shows that classical Trinitarianism is NOT modalism.

So, according to the diagram and the dogma, the Father (Pater) is not (non est) the Son (Filius), is not the Holy Spirit (Spiritus Sanctus, abbreviated Spus Sat) and the Holy Spirit is not the Son. But all of them, according to the diagram is God (Deus).

This is obviously not Biblical Theism. The diagram does not, for instance differentiate between God as nature or God as the Being. Trinitarians also equivocate when they say that all three are "God." This qualitiveness of full Godhood is never used in Scripture, hence its hybrid foreignness to Scripture.

Jaco

10. *on 17 Aug 2010 at 9:56 am*10 Sean

Just added bios and pictures for both Danny and Marc (see post above)

Also, let's publicize this debate...please drop **this link** around on the internet.

11. *on 22 Aug 2010 at 11:01 am*11 Ray

It seems that I don't necessarily agree with classical Trinitarianism represented by the picture that says "The Father is not The Son. and The Father is not The Holy Spirit, for isn't the Father as the Son, and The Holy Spirit as The Father.

12. *on 22 Aug 2010 at 2:20 pm*12 Doubting Thomas

Ray

Do you believe that at some point in time God the Father created his Son (the Messiah) Yeshua/Jesus in his own image in order to completely and fully reflect his (the Creator's) character and nature???

13. *on 30 Aug 2010 at 12:10 am*13 Danny Dixon

Created? Well, I wouldn't word it that way (i.e. "the Father created his Son"). I'd say that at some point in time the Father gave the Son life, and the Son was in the Father's image or form reflecting the Father's character and nature.

John 5:26

John 6:57

14. on 31 Aug 2010 at 12:24 am¹⁴ *Doubting Thomas*

Danny

I'm not really sure what you mean. You said, "I'd say that at some point in time the Father gave the Son life."

If the Father gave Yeshua/Jesus life then it would seem that before this he wasn't alive yet. In other words there was a point in time when Yeshua/Jesus (although foretold of) did not exist. When someone is brought into existence are they not at that point created???

I don't mean to be argumentative, but that's just the way I see it...

15. on 31 Aug 2010 at 11:28 am¹⁵ *Danny Dixon*

I think you understand me perfectly. I am saying that at some point in pre-human time the one we know as "The Word of God," Yeshua/Jesus did not have life or existence. Then God "fathered him" in a way that made him *mongenes* "unique" or "one of a kind" among the sons of God.

16. on 31 Aug 2010 at 1:21 pm¹⁶ *Doubting Thomas*

Danny

Sorry but I don't understand you perfectly. What your saying doesn't seem to make much sense to me. Let me see if I got this right. You are claiming that Yeshua/Jesus pre-existed as the "Word of God", but at this point didn't have life or existence. How can someone pre-exist and yet at the same time not have existence???

The way I see it the "Word of God" or "Wisdom of God" pre-existed from the beginning and was made manifest in Yeshua/Jesus. 1st. Peter 1:20-21 Peter says, "He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."

The definition I found of manifest - verb (used with object) - to make clear or evident to the eye or the understanding; show plainly. From my point of view by saying Jesus `was made manifest in the last times` is the same thing as saying God created Jesus in the last times. I am not a scholar or an expert, but like I said this is just the way I see it...

17. on 01 Sep 2010 at 9:19 am¹⁷ *Doubting Thomas*

Danny

I just read your 2nd. Unitarian Constructive (3a). I now have a much clearer understanding of what it is you are trying to say.

It would appear you are an Arian in your beliefs, in that you believe Yeshua/Jesus pre-existed before his birth in Bethlehem and lived for a time (unspecified) with the Father (Creator). You also seem to believe that at one time Yeshua/Jesus was a deity (a God) although somehow less of a deity (or God) than his Father, God Almighty (the Creator), and that he gave up his deity to become flesh (human).

I am a Socinian in regards to my beliefs and I believe that Yeshua/Jesus did not exist (other than being foretold/or planned) before his birth in Bethlehem. I mainly get this from the OT prophesies regarding the coming Messiah. Since the subject of this particular blog is about whether God the Father is a singular individual or a multi-personal being, it probably would not be appropriate to discuss this issue here on this string.

By the way, I am a Biblical Unitarian, and I agree with you that God is a singular individual and that his son Yeshua/Jesus is a unique being separate from the father. The Trinity doctrine (which in my opinion is not really a doctrine at all, but is actually just a human opinion) never did make very very much sense to me.

If you want to continue our discussion on whether Yeshua/Jesus pre-existed or not, perhaps we can switch over to another string that is more appropriate for this kind of discussion. Like you said we Unitarians do have differences between ourselves in regards to various details regarding the Son, Yeshua/Jesus, the Messiah, our Lord and Savior.

I think the article entitled "Five Options in Christology" dated June 21st. 2010 would probably be a good string to continue this conversation (if you wanted to that is). May the peace of God be with you and with all of us...

18. on 01 Sep 2010 at 4:50 pm18 Danny Dixon

DT:

While I believe what I believe, I can honestly say that I've never read anything by Arius. So I'm not an Arian. I get my views from a rather simple reading of Scriptures. I can see how you can get your views from a slightly more complicated or interpretative view of some of the same scriptures.

I'm a little busy now with various things. Let's correspond by email and see how things go. BereanDAD2010@yahoo.com

Thanks!

Danny Dixon

19. *on 01 Sep 2010 at 6:00 pm*¹⁹ *Doubting Thomas*

Danny

You are not the only one that has never read anything written by Arius. All of Arius' writings were destroyed near the end of the 4th. century. Just like all the writings of the Jewish Christians were destroyed around this same time frame. I can appreciate that you just believe what you believe. I am the same way. It just so happens my beliefs seem to fit perfectly with what the Socinians believe. Unfortunately I do have some beliefs in addition to that which most Socinians do not agree with.

I would prefer to discuss this openly on a blog where other people with more knowledge than myself can intervene and correct either of us or give advice to either of us. I have a lot of respect for the people on this blog. In my opinion they are very knowledgeable and are not judgmental. We actually have a few regular bloggers here who appear to have Arian beliefs like yourself.

Ray and Margaret are the only two I know of for sure, but there might be a few more out there that I am not aware of.

BTW - You are doing a great job on the debate...

20. *on 01 Sep 2010 at 6:56 pm*²⁰ *Ray*

So when did God give the Son to have life within himself?

It seems to me that it could have been long after he was alive.

21. *on 02 Sep 2010 at 6:56 pm*²¹ *Lorna*

When you say that the son is not "god" but "divine" based on one interpretation of John 1:1, are you saying he is a "DIVINE MAN"? Did the angels who presented themselves in human form to mankind from time to time—did they cease to be angels and become human because they took on the form of flesh when they visited earth? I mean this seems to be what I am understanding you to say of Jesus/Yeshua that when he was in heaven he was the word, but when he came to earth in the form of human flesh he was just a man—a divine one—but just a man. When he returned to heaven and took the throne at the right hand of god, he is a man is what I think I am understanding. So, once those angels who visited Hannah, etc in the form of flesh returned to the heavens, are they now men? The scriptures say that we entertain angels unaware, and I don't think they were talking simply about a person delivering a message because we would KNOW when it was a PERSON delivering a message, do those angels who come in the form of flesh re-enter the heavenly with the status of "just a man" (with the

possibility of divine status). I am trying to wrap my brain around the understand of man but divine. I mean Adam was created “in the image of god”; is he divine?

22. *on 03 Sep 2010 at 4:33 pm*22 *Danny Dixon*

Lorna:

Your question from above is answered in speech 2b at comments 13 (your restatement) and 14 (my reply).

23. *on 03 Sep 2010 at 7:49 pm*23 *Lorna*

If it takes me a little bit to respond, I am moving, so I will probably be enroute. Next week I will have to return for a bit in preparation for a court case. I'm am obviously no scholar, but I like this way of doing things. Every one is respected and you don't have 25 post from one person and then that person telling someone to just shutup when the another person responds once or twice to their 25:) I appreciate this type of setup even if we don't all agree. I like the idea that everything is posted so that if I am misunderstood or misunderstand someone I can interact instead of making accusations. That's just my way of introduction even though we don't all agree. So, if I don't get back quickly, I may be getting my ducks in a row—not ignoring you, or maybe I don't know the answer and time to look around:)

24. *on 03 Sep 2010 at 8:12 pm*24 *Doubting Thomas*

Lorna

I like to think that God is most interested in the way that we treat the people we disagree with rather than the way we treat the people we agree with. After all everyone can be nice to the people that agree with them. I also like this format. Good luck moving.

BTW if you put a space before your happy face:) it comes out better

1st Unitarian Constructive (1a)

August 17th, 2010 by Danny Dixon

This is the first post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



A Granville-Sharpian greeting to each forum reader in the name of God and our Lord Jesus Christ! This is the second discussion on these matters that I have had with my capable friend Marc Taylor. I have learned some things since that discussion with him in June-October of 2006. I have discarded and indeed embraced some other things since that time. But this is all in a careful desire to be taught by God and refined by him as I come to more perfectly and responsibly understand truth as revealed in Scripture. And I am confident that our debate will be instructive to all. Let me begin by expressing briefly that I happily write here on our assigned topic that affirms Jesus to be Christ, the Son of God. And everyone here embracing that truth may have life in his name (John 20:31).

Crucial Definitions

I begin by saying that if Jesus is the Son of God Almighty, that is a far cry from saying that he is Almighty God the Son. In affirming then, that the Father is Almighty alone, this debate should be best developed through correctly explicating the *relationship* between the Father and the Son. When I stress that “The *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ is alone God Almighty,” I am trying to use biblical terms to express ideas intended for readers God intended to impress with the normal and logical minds he has given them.

We all have known “fathers” and some of us are, or have known, “sons.” So we can understand language like this without difficulty. That the Scriptures use such common expressions reveals the fact that our God wanted us to understand the concept; and while different contexts therein speak of different kinds of fathers and sons, the one concept that biblically inheres in the terms, regardless of context, is that of temporal precedence in time of fathers to sons. If I say that there exists the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I mean that Christ does not precede the Father, and that the Father and the Son do not *both* progress back *eternally* in time. Jesus’ Sonship necessarily implies his beginning. When I stress the phrase our *Lord Jesus Christ*, I mean that individual who at some point in time was not “Lord” and he was not “Christ.” Rather those are positions of designation and authority that were granted or given to Jesus. He did not eternally have them.

When I stress *Almighty God* in our debate, I mean the Father who is self-existing, the *Ho On*, the One Who Is and is rendered “The Being” in Brenton’s English translation of the Septuagint (See the last phrase of Exodus 3:14); the one who is in heaven and is powerful enough, in and of himself to do whatever he wills (Psalm 115:3) whose existence extends eternally into the past, who is in the present, and who will exist forever into the future; the one who has always been immortal and all powerful; and if there are any other biblically identifiable attributes that he has, they inhere within his nature, not being at all

granted, as opposed to any other being of spirit like created angels or the Son to whom, as we shall see below, he has given life.

These are some basic definitions. (They are by no means complete, and I may add to or clarify others in my second constructive presentation if necessary!) Having said so much, I present the following biblical arguments that I am confident Marc can competently address (please read the passages provided):

The Case

1. Jesus derives his life, and therefore his existence, from the Father who gave it to him.

Jesus says the Father “gave to the Son to have life in himself,” and he “lives because of the Father” (John 5:26; 6:57). Jesus has *not* always had existence. So the Father is the cause of Jesus’ granted beginning; the Word was divine by nature, or designated qualitatively as “a god” (John 1:1 See the comment made by Dan Wallace regarding the Greek construction in this verse, which he says, “is likely to emphasize the *nature* of the Word, not his identity. That is to say, the Word is true deity but he is not the same *person* as the *Theos* [“God”] mentioned earlier in the verse” in *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* [Zondervan, 1996], pp. 45, 46).

2. Jesus’ prerogatives and powers are not original, but are things he has seen and been taught by his Father.

Jesus says, he “can do nothing of himself,” and what he does and speaks, he was “taught” by his Father (John 5:19; 8:28). Were he God he would need no prompter apart from his own eternally divine will.

3. The Father granted Jesus authority for his humble service (Matthew 9:5; 28:18). This includes his status as Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36; Philippians 2:6-11).

Almighty God would not be given such status, for he would always have had it.

4. Jesus’ divine fullness has been granted by the Father (Colossians 1:19; 2:9) .

5. Jesus, known as “my Lord” (Hebrew *Adoni*), is a lesser individual from Jehovah (Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:43-44).

6. Jesus *has* a Father and God. (John 20:17; Rev. 1:6; 3:2, 12, and other verses).

The Father is never spoken of as having a Father and a God as is Jesus.

7. Jesus explicitly denies that being “one” with the Father meant that he was equal with God his Father.

He admits the subordinate relationship of being God’s Son (John 10:30-36). Indeed, his immediate further explanation of this relationship is that he was in the Father who was also in him (v. 38); but he presents *the precise comparison of the interrelationship* as existing between himself and his Father and his disciples in the remote context of the

same phraseology in John 17:21-23—and no one takes this passage to mean that “oneness” makes the disciples to be God!

8. Jesus specifically says in an unambiguous reference that his Father was the *only* true God (John 17:3).

This concept is explicitly supported in Paul’s observation that “to us there is only one God, the Father, who is separate from the one Lord, Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 8:6. See Ephesians 4:5, 6).

9. The Jews do not charge Jesus with the blasphemy of making himself equal with God. Rather the blasphemy is of declaring his prerogative to judge them as leaders.

Darrell Bock, research professor of New Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary, points this out in his book *Blasphemy and Exaltation in Judaism: The charge against Jesus in Mark 14:53-65* (Baker, 1998) . Regarding this he writes, “Judgment, whether from God or through intermediate agents, was the appropriate response” (p. 235). The point is that had the Jews retained the understanding that Jesus blasphemed by claiming to be God the Jews would have used it. They do not.

10. As God’s worthy life-giving and judicial Son, Jesus can properly receive honor because the Father has appointed it to be so.

This truth is revealed in a context where prerogatives, normally thought of as belonging to the Father—namely to “give life” to whomever he wishes and to exercise “all judgment”—are given to the Son (See John 5:21-23).

Categories of Error

As you observe the debate you will notice a number of categories of error that may arise causing my friend Marc to fall into theological traps compelled by his doctrine:

1. Imprecise Contextual Distinctions

Look for a failure to make remote and immediate contextual distinctions about biblical terms and phrases like “G/god(s),” “Son of God,” “Lord”/ “LORD”/ “my Lord”/ “Lord,” etc., and the various Hebrew or Greek designations for them.

2. A disposition not to recognize the force of scholarly acknowledgment of equal alternatives.

I don’t think it will be necessary to be too scholarly, though some technical points may come up. Most issues can be illustrated with your Bible alone I am hoping.

3. Confusion about the biblical principle of agency.

God grants authority to angels and to men to act *as* him (Eg. Exodus 3:1-6 // Acts 7:31ff, esp. 36; Exodus 7:1); to carry his name (Exodus 23:20-21). If God assigns tasks to someone and grants that individual the authority to act in his name or on his behalf, Scripture shows, time and again, that the individual can be called God. Indeed, some God-like descriptions can even be assigned to humans in some circumstances.

Constructive #1 Summary

God is eternal. Jesus is not. Various designations show why Jesus is shown not to be eternal and Almighty God as is his Father. He admits as much regarding himself when others make the mistake and would call him God. And he specifically says that only his Father is the true God—a point confirmed by Paul’s writings.

This should be enough for now. Marc’s up for rebuttal of these points. And let’s see how he fares thereafter in his First Constructive presentation.

7 Responses to “1st Unitarian Constructive (1a)”

1. *on 17 Aug 2010 at 8:34 pm1 Lonzo Pribble*

Christ, like angels, may be said to be eternal, inasmuch as both had their beginning in the age of “eternity” as distinguished from “time” (Col. 1:15-16). But in either case, “eternal” does not always mean “without beginning”.
-Lonzo Pribble

2. *on 17 Aug 2010 at 9:42 pm2 James Nehemiah*

Regarding the statements God is eternal and Jesus is not. The first thing that comes to my mind is that Jesus was raised from the grave and is indeed eternal in some sense of the word, and perhaps the most important sense of the word.

“This concept is explicitly supported in Paul’s observation that “to us there is only one God, the Father, who is separate from the one Lord, Jesus Christ.”

And the scriptures that you give for reference about the above statements do not clarify that they are separate.

Just a few thoughts.

3. *on 18 Aug 2010 at 4:00 am3 Jaco*

Granville-Sharpian greeting...I couldn’t resist the chuckle!

We all have known “fathers” and some of us are, or have known, “sons.” So we can understand language like this without difficulty. That the Scriptures use such common expressions reveals the fact that our God wanted us to understand the concept

This is a very important and fortunately a well-observed point. EVERYTHING the Bible reveals to us regarding God and his relationship to everything else, are in terms of anthropomorphism. The distinctness in “someones” (I prefer circumlocution of “person”), the inequality between them, as well as the

inequality in temporality are a few inherent implications demanded by the anthropomorphic metaphor of Father and Son.

9. The Jews do not charge Jesus with the blasphemy of making himself equal with God. Rather the blasphemy is of declaring his prerogative to judge them as leaders.

The Jews charged Jesus with different accusations on different occasions. To use their opinion of him and their judgment as a gage for what God's opinion and judgment might be would be nothing short of preposterous. Arguing this way is indeed desperate!

...to carry his name (Exodus 23:20-21)

Well-noted. Even if the NT granted Jesus, God's sh'liach (Heb. 3:1), the honor to bear God's Name (which it doesn't), that would in no way be any proof of his equality or even identity with the Yahweh of the OT. That was exactly why the judges in OT times were called elohim. Sh'liach, sh'liach, sh'liach.

As regards eternity; it should not be confused with everlasting life. Strictly speaking, eternity implies no beginning, nor end. If this concept applies to Jesus, it violates the Father-Son anthropomorphic implication of temporality. Only the Father has that ability. The Son, however, received immortality and thus everlasting life: life with a beginning in the womb of Mary, but without end.

Excited about this debate,

Jaco

4. *on 18 Aug 2010 at 12:44 pm4 Danny André Dixon*

Regarding Jaco's comment 3, my case point #7 is not desperate. It would have been easy to accuse Jesus of claiming to be Almighty God had he been doing so. It wasn't blasphemy to claim to be the Messiah; others before (and after) Jesus had done that. How radical it was for the one claiming to be the Messiah to declare judgment on the leaders of the people. What is the evidence that he was claiming to be God Almighty in his admission that he was "the Son of the Blessed"? Jesus had told the leaders that there was nothing fundamentally blasphemous in being called theoi/elohim (John 10:33ff).

People want to distract from the point by inappropriately stressing that the judges of Israel were evil, whom God addressed in Jesus' allusion to Psalm 82:6. Jesus point was that people can be called "gods" by Almighty God himself WITH NO OFFENSE; and it should ALSO NOT be considered an offense if they would recognize that he was not calling himself God Almighty but God's Son—a lesser, not an equal—designation. "I and the Father are one" of John 10:30 is a statement

of relationship. This is the identical relationship of unity that Jesus' disciples shared with him and with his Father. It is NOT a "oneness" of authority in rank (See John 17:21-23).

5. on 19 Aug 2010 at 2:54 am5 Jaco

Danny

I am a BU myself, just to set the record straight.

Maybe I should have expressed myself more clearly. And I suppose my comment on this was more preparatory than anything else of a possible reference to the wicked Jews' reaction as a basis for arguing for a position favorable to the trinity. On several occasions the Jews accused Jesus (and even John the Baptist, for that matter), of unfounded vices (Matt 11:18, 19, John 5:18). To use the Jews' wicked, self-serving and God-dishonoring judgments (even outright disobedience to the Law, as in the case of Barabbas) would be therefore utterly disingenuous. As you said,

It would have been easy to accuse Jesus of claiming to be Almighty God had he been doing so.

To rearrange what you said here:

If Jesus claimed to be Almighty God, they would have easily accused him of doing that.

I agree with you fully. It would thus be logically flawed (affirming the consequent), to continue, saying,

They accused him of making that claim, thus, he truly claimed to be Almighty God.

As with the Bowman/Burke Debate, I pointed out the weakness of Burke's take on Heb. 1:10-12, even though it was favorable to my position. Likewise, whether one argues for or against the Trinity, using the judgment of a people as morally flawed as those wicked Jews'; no amount of sophistry would do either case justice. Their impression of Christ simply cannot lead us to the real Christ.

We are of kindred spirits, friend. I hope I clarified myself.

In Christ,

Jaco

6. on 19 Aug 2010 at 8:45 am6 Danny Dixon

Re: Comment 5.

Crystally.

Danny Andre'

7. *on 20 Aug 2010 at 4:09 pm*7 Danny André Dixon

Re: Comment 2 by James Nehemiah

James:

I am not ignoring you. I'd rather wait for Marc's comment on the point before I elaborate on the texts mention in my Case Point #8. I'll have to decide as the discussion progress.

Respectfully,

Danny Dixon

Rebuttal (1b)

August 21st, 2010 by Marc Taylor

This is the second post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



Seeing that there is only a 1500 word limit I was surprised to see that Danny didn't select a few passages and give a thorough explanation/defense for his position. What he often did do is simply give a scant one or two sentence affirmation followed by several passages. The somewhat large amount of passage citations may look impressive and convince the unsuspecting but this shotgun approach still doesn't hit its intended target of attempting to prove that the Father alone is Almighty God.

a. John 17:3

When the Lord Jesus said the only true God He wasn't denying that He was God but that the Father is the only true God in relation to false gods. The expression "true God" is always used in Scripture in relation to the true God in contrast with false gods (idols) (2 Chronicles 15:3; Jeremiah 10:10, 11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9 and 1 John 5:20, 21).

The following Greek lexicons also teach that John 17:3 is to be understood this way as well:

1. Brown: in Jn. 17:3, monos is linked with alethinos, true, in contrast to the deceptive appearance (pseudos) of all alleged gods and revealers (NIDNTT 2:724, One).

2. Thayer: ton theon, the one, true God, in contrast with the polytheism of the Gentiles (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, ginwskw, page 117).

3. Vine: John 7:28; 17:3; 1 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 6:10; these declare that God fulfils the meaning of His Name, He is "very God," in distinction from all other gods, false gods (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, True, page 1170).

In fact, Jude 1:4 states that the Lord Jesus is our only Master (despotes) but according to Acts 4:24 the Father is also our Master (despotes). If one insists that the Lord Jesus is not the true God based on John 17:3 then so too the Father is not our Master according to Jude 1:4.

b. Functional subjection does not necessitate ontological inferiority. The wife is to subject herself to her husband but she is equally a person as him (Ephesians 5:24).

c. The Lord Jesus has a Father and God because He is also a man. That in no way proves He can't be God as well.

d. John 5:26

This passage does not disprove the aseity of the Son but it refers to His Mediatorial role (cf. 1 John 5:11).

Barnes' Notes On the New Testament

<http://studylight.org/com/bnn/view.cgi?book=joh&chapter=005>

Hath he given. This shows that the power or authority here spoken of was given or committed to the Lord Jesus. This evidently does not refer to the manner in which the second person of the Trinity exists, for the power and authority of which Christ here speaks is that which he exercises as Mediator. It is the power of raising the dead and judging the world. In regard to his divine nature, it is not affirmed here that it is in any manner derived; nor does the fact that God is said to have given him this power prove that he was inferior in his nature or that his existence was derived. For,
1st. It has reference merely to office. As Mediator, he may be said to have been appointed by the Father.

2nd. Appointment to office does not prove that the one who is appointed is inferior in nature to him who appoints him. A son may be appointed to a particular work by a parent, and yet, in regard to talents and every other qualification, may be equal or superior to the father. He sustains the relation of a son, and in this relation there is an official inferiority. General Washington was not inferior in nature and talents to the men who commissioned him. He simply derived authority from them to do what he was otherwise fully able to do. So the Son, as Mediator, is subject to the Father; yet this proves nothing about his nature.

e. Acts 2:36

The resurrection powerfully confirmed what the Lord Jesus already was - Lord (cf. Luke 2:11). So too in Romans 1:4 He is declared to be the Son of God because of His resurrection but He was already the Son of God before this time (John 1:49 and 11:27).

f. Colossians 2:9

I'm not sure why Danny cited this passage when it teaches the very opposite of what he is trying to affirm. The Lord Jesus is referred to as theotes and it is defined as follows:

1. Brown: theotes "must mean deity, Godhead, entirety, the sum total of divine attributes" (NIDNTT 1:740, Fullness).
2. EDNT: theotes means (in contrast to theiotees, "divinity, divine quality") deity, the rank of God (EDNT 2:143, theotees).
3. Louw/Nida: the nature or state of being God (A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains, 12.13, theotes, page 140).
4. Thayer: the state of being God (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, theotes, page 288).
5. Vine: Paul is declaring that in the Son there dwells all the fulness of absolute Godhead; they were no mere rays of Divine glory which gilded Him, lighting up His Person for a season and with a splendour not His own; but He was, and is, absolute and perfect God (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Divinity, pages 320-321).

g. Citing Psalm 110:1 and Matthew 22:43-44 Danny asserted that Jesus "is a lesser individual from Jehovah". If that doesn't constitute an assertion without proof I don't know what does.

h. I will address the concept of Agency in my First Constructive Statement.

12 Responses to “Rebuttal (1b)”

1. *on 22 Aug 2010 at 12:13 pm1 Gerald Manning*

Marc,

While it will be interesting to see how Danny decides to address the the responses you DID give in your post, please consider the fact that in my own cut and paste of your two presentations, Danny used exactly 1500 of the 1500 words he was allotted. You, on the other hand, used only 926 leaving you more than 500 words that could have been spent in covering one or more of his points.

Do keep in mind that the Moderator has indicated that additional comments can be made here in the comments section. A little later on I might make some comments to which you may respond. And as far as I can tell, there is NO restriction on the amount of space that you may use in this section of the forum to ELABORATE on your responses to comments. I suspect that the Moderator, in limiting the number of words in the debate proper, is hoping that he will at least HAVE a readership of the basic debate above, whether they are interested in jumping into the expanded comments or not. In that light, consider that right here is where additional elements of the real debate can occur.

While I haven't read the other debate that the Moderator refers to in the introduction section, and while I can appreciate and accept as fact what Danny “often did do” (presumably in the other debate), this is the debate at hand, and we as readers are interested in seeing what both of you WILL DO with each other's constructive comments and rebuttals and questions and answers.

Looking forward to the continued discussion!

Gerald

2. *on 22 Aug 2010 at 7:08 pm2 Marc Taylor*

Hello and thanks Gerald.

It would have been easier for me to comment more had I known what specifically I had to address. Certain assertions by Danny were quite abrupt. Not only were many passages cited by Danny I wasn't sure specifically how he meant to use them for his case. I know he put them under a certain heading or sentence but other than that it would have been a shot in the dark in responding to them. When I post my affirmative I will be very clear with my explanations of all the passages I cite so there is no room for ambiguity.

Peace

Marc

3. on 24 Aug 2010 at 8:52 am3 Danny Dixon

Re: Comment 2 Above

Marc,

I understand that my responsibility is to make a rebuttal on Saturday to your constructive statement due tomorrow (Tuesday). I see it as permissible, consequently, to make some comments regarding your rebuttal to my first constructive presentation, especially since you imply a desire for clarification of what I meant in the use of certain passages of Scripture in the presentation of my case. I am happy to engage thereto here.

You respond to my affirmative statement In my 1st Constructive Case Point #8 concerning John 17:3 by arguing about what is so I wrote that Jesus specifically says in an *not* in the text. Jesus didn't have to deny that he was God when his purpose was not to deny anything but to affirm that the Father *is the only true God to be known*. Any other affirmative statements that you would infer about his own alleged equality with the Father must come from other sources and statements. John 17:3 does not inform us about Jesus. It informs us about the Father, who Jesus says is the "only true God." Anything else that could be going on is either presumed by you or in your mind from some other unnamed sources. In any case your thoughts would not reverse Jesus' words unless they indicated that he—Jesus—was God (whatever that means to you).

You didn't respond to 1 Corinthians 8:6 or Ephesians 4:5. This concept is explicitly supported in Paul's observation that "to us there is only one God, the Father, who is separate from the one Lord, Jesus Christ." The separation is implied in the very wording of singularity. Whatever he means by "God" in this context is something that is different from statements that would be made about himself. Jesus is not the Father. The Father is the one God. Paul affirms that this God is unique among the other so-called Gods, as some at Corinth incorrectly believed. I appreciate your Brown, Thayer, and Vine word studies. Without a doubt they inform us on what Jesus meant about the identity of his Father, the only true God.

I cannot help but wonder what you mean when you use the word "God," Marc. It seems so fast and loose. Does it mean Father? Does it mean Trinity? If it does, why shouldn't I understand you to mean that there is Jesus, one entity, and there is the only true God, in this case a binity of the Holy Spirit and the Father, of which Jesus would otherwise be a Trinity-making part when the word "God" is used outside any context where any *one* individual is indeed called God, as in John 17:3, 1 Corinthians 8:6; and Ephesians 4:5. I don't need to quote them. You know what they say.

I do note that you use 1 John 5:20-21, but I am not sure if you are wanting to say, in that particular verse, that Jesus is finally revealed as being God too, as another entity who is the *only* true God. This passage would not be contradicting John 17:3 if we see it as another passage referring to the Father. Please inform us on your use of it. And while you are at it, how are we to understand the word “God” in passages where Jesus is spoken of as a different entity than one who is called God, as in John 17:3.

Subordination and Ontology

You talk about functional subjection not necessitating ontological inferiority. But you do not discuss it in one of the significant contexts in which I mention it, namely John 10:30-36 and John 17:21-23. Jesus tries to show the Jews that he was not God but was something less, God’s Son. But let’s assume that he was not really trying to leave an impression of the necessity of ontological inferiority, especially inasmuch as he said that he was “one” with the Father. What are the implications for you when that oneness that he admits that he shares with his Father in his prayer of John 17:21-23 is, in the same language, applied to the disciples? Are you suggesting that they also should not be seen as ontologically inferior to his Father when they are to be one with him as he is one with his Father?

It makes better sense to say that Fatherhood implies begetting, at least it does in the Scriptures. God became the Father of Jesus at a point in time. God became the Father of his other Son Adam (Luke 3:38), who later became the father of the rest of the human race who are, ideally, to become sons of God as well (John 1:12). It’s true that you want to agree to the words “Son of God” and grant that he was recognized as such by Nathaniel and Paul (in John 11:49 and Romans 1:4 respectively), but is that what you mean when you say that Jesus was ontologically equal with God.

I grant that Jesus was the Lord Messiah, conceivably even before he was declared such—even as early as his birth or at some time before. Is the fact that he is Messiah what you take the Scripture to mean in *all* the passages where Jesus is *equally and ontologically* the Son of God? This won’t fly according to your Trinitarian theology, Marc. But I may be mistaken—perhaps this is what you mean when you say that Jesus is Almighty God the Son. Perhaps you mean that in to all eternity past Jesus as Son of God means that he is the eternal Messiah of Israel.

Dueling Theological Banjos: Scholar versus Scholar

You would have us compare John 5:26 and 1 John 5:11 and see them as passages talking about Jesus’ Mediatorial role. While I hate to get involved in what I call “The Dueling Banjos of Scripture,” you make readers think that they are not capable of reading a passage in context and of being able to come to a sensible

conclusion in contextual study of a passage when you appeal to commentaries as the final arbiter of truth on the meaning of passages that prove difficult. You provide a link that takes us to Barnes' study notes on the passage, and upon going there we see the phrase "hath life" taken from the midst of the context and the commentator's conclusion that this must refer to Christ's mediatorial role. That Jesus is mediator between us and God and that he is the one who dispenses life to others on God's behalf is certainly taught in the passage.

What your commentator and most others that I perused refuse to do is clearly admit the force of the simplicity of language in the passage that says Jesus, in whatever role he may be serving, first derives his life from God. So here I will quote another scholar who does not falter in his presentation of the meaning of the verse is esteemed scholar F.F. Bruce, who writes plainly regarding the meaning of John 5:26. He writes:

The Son's dependence on the Father for 'life in himself,' as well as for every function which he exercises, has been emphasized in John 5:19-30, especially in 5:26. Here it is stated briefly. The Son who derives his own life from the Father has authority to impart that life to those who believe in him, with this distinction: what he receives is 'life in himself'; what they receive is life in him (F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John*, Introduction, Exposition and Notes [Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1983], p. 161).

Bruce also writes:

It's a good quote for my side. You had a quote for your side. Now that we've done with the quotations, let's have the readership decide based on their reading of the text, the commentaries, and whatever else they wish to study. But let's not leave them with the impression that commentaries are the way to know truth, because commentaries can be found for either perspective.

All immortality except God's is derived. The Father, who has life in Himself, has shared with the Son this privilege of having life in Himself. All others receive life in the Son." (Bruce in his "Foreword" to Edward Fudge's *The Fire That Consumes* [Lincoln: An Authors Guild Backinprint.com Edition, 2001], p. vii. The two preceding quotes are taken from Patrick Navas, *Divine Truth or Human Tradition* [Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2007], p. 167).

Nor should I fail to mention that you completely ignore the other passage that I had listed in conjunction with John 5:26, namely 6:57, which reads unequivocally, "As the living Father sent me, I live because of the Father." Jesus acknowledges that the cause of his life is the Father who willed that he should have life. This is what Father's do—start life. What needs to be stressed here is not Jesus function in his role as mediator. Rather, for purposes of this debate, there should be a careful admission that Jesus derives his own life and his role as life giver from the Father.

The same type of point is argued by Paul in Colossians 1:19 where God's desire was that "the fullness" should dwell in Jesus. This fullness has its origins in the Father and transfers to Jesus. That the fullness of deity came to be in Jesus is something granted because the Father had the desire for it to be so. But this is a natural function of Fatherhood, and Colossians 2:9 talks about the reality AFTER God grants it.

Danny

4. *on 24 Aug 2010 at 12:56 pm4 Danny Dixon*

Marc,

In your subpoint "g," you say that you cannot see how in my citation of Psalm 110:1, referred to by Jesus in Matthew 22:43-44, that I can assert the passage teaches that 'is a lesser individual from Jehovah,' and that my comment constitutes an assertion without proof.

Psalm 110:1 is an Old Testament passage cited or alluded to in the New Testament probably more than any other passage. It is universally understood to be a Messianic Psalm by Trinitarians and strict monotheists alike, and that in this passage the Father is speaking to the Son of God.

The Hebrew in the passage, however, indicates that one person, "Yahweh," usually translated "LORD" with all caps in most English translations or as "Jehovah" in the American Standard Version of 1901, which I have used occasionally here.

"Jehovah" is speaking to an individual identified as "my lord" in some English translations or as "my Lord" (capitalizing the second word "Lord" in the verse). While the narrator (David) indicates that Jehovah speaks, he is speaking to the person who in the Hebrew is referred to as "Adoni," the Hebrew for the diminutive term used of men or of angels in the Old Testament, but not definitively of Jehovah, or of Jehovah's other designation "Adonai." Please note the difference in spelling between Adoni and Adonai. They are not the same.

The Messiah is not Adonai. Neither is he Yahweh. Also Yahweh is not referred to as Adoni. This in itself is a very strong proof, not a mere assertion, that Messiah Jesus is not Almighty God Yahweh/Adonai.

Please, if you wish, discuss these details with me here where the space is apparently unlimited as to word count (Unless the Moderator will correct my indulgence.)

Danny Andre'

5. on 24 Aug 2010 at 1:11 pm5 Danny Dixon

Marc,

Regarding Colossians 2:9 and Colossians 1:19, I was trying to say that Jesus' "Fullness" of divinity is something that God desired for Jesus to have and consequently granted him. This is also the goal of Christians, as Paul says in Ephesians 3:14, 19 that his prayer (he bows his knees in prayer so that) expressing his desire that the Ephesians "may be filled with all the fullness of God." And, of course, John says that this is the Christians' destiny, as "we know that when He (Jesus) is revealed, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure" (1 John 3:2b-3).

Jesus' present divinity is the prototype of our own. Resurrection and immortality is our destiny and hope as it was for Jesus once he made his appearance here and lived his life as originator and perfecter of our faith, which we are to imitate (Galatians 2:20; Hebrews 12:2).

Danny Andre'

6. on 24 Aug 2010 at 2:02 pm6 Danny Dixon

Marc,

I should say a little more about the Colin Brown, Thayer, and Vine comments in their lexical entries that you cited. That the words you cited indicate divinity in no way indicates divinity into eternity past as well as eternity future. Jesus has not always been one with the fullness of divinity. He had a beginning, life, originally derived from God, and immortality, also from God after his resurrection.

Keep in mind, when you cite Thayer, that he held, particularly regarding Jesus as the Logos in the first few verses of John 1 that the Logos (the Word) "is expressly distinguished from the first cause" (J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977 reprint], p. 133).

And be careful in citing Colin Brown, esteemed editor of the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. , as an advocate of Jesus being one with the Father into eternity past. He writes that:

the title 'Son of God' is not in itself a designation of personal deity or an expression of metaphysical distinctions within the Godhead. Indeed to be 'Son of God' one has to be a being who is not God! It is a designation for a creature indicating a special relationship with God. In particular, it denotes God's representative, God's vice-regent. It is a designation of kingship, identifying the

king as God's son" (from the theological journal *Ex Auditu* (7, 1991) as quoted in *Focus on the Kingdom Newsletter*, May, 2004 Volume 6 No. 8,).

Danny Andre'

7. on 24 Aug 2010 at 4:45 pm7 Jaco

Good day,

Just my little contribution to this important debate. I think Danny presented a good first constructive. I think the essentials were mentioned on behalf of the Unitarian side. Elaboration will, of course, be good and necessary. So as not to jump ahead, I will reply to selected issues from Mr Taylor's rebuttal:

John 17:3

When the Lord Jesus said the only true God He wasn't denying that He was God but that the Father is the only true God in relation to false gods. The expression "true God" is always used in Scripture in relation to the true God in contrast with false gods (idols) (2 Chronicles 15:3; Jeremiah 10:10, 11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9 and 1 John 5:20, 21).

Introducing the notion of "God in contrast with idols" in no way weakens the BU stance. It could, however, amount to special pleading, even a red herring, to introduce this notion and have this passage mean anything else based on this notion, since this was not remotely even the presupposition against which Jesus said this prayer.

But, even if he did (which I contend he doesn't), it would still confirm the Hebrew understanding of monotheism, which Biblical Unitarianism accurately stands for. Simple textual analysis and cognitive linguistics would have us conclude that the speaker (Jesus) identifies His Father, someone distinct and separate from Jesus himself as THE (definite) ONLY (exclusive) TRUE (or actual) GOD (identity). This also forms a complex Name Jesus himself gives to someone ELSE, namely his Father. The parts of this name and the ownership of the complex Name necessitate the exclusivity thereof belonging to no one else, but the Father. The Only True God can only be a single Someone - grammatically and semantically. According to Jesus, this can only be his Father.

What strengthens this position even further, is the fact that the immediate context has Jesus placed in relation to the Only True God. By addressing the Only True God as Someone other than Jesus, and by adding, "and the one you have sent out," Jesus confirms his separateness in identity (Someone else is the True God) and function (the True God sent him out). Except if one suffers from autism, or from the delirium caused by literal or doctrinal opiates, language serves no real purpose, and do we end up with an understanding similar to Augustine's reconstructed version:

This is eternal life, that they may know Thee and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent, as the only true God. (Homilies on John, tractate CV, chapter 17)

Now, it does call for someone of considerable nerve to even dare to reconstruct Scripture in order to somehow “improve” on it. Something our Lord says will not be left unaccounted for (Rev. 22:19). Although Trinitarians’ mishandling of this text is not as overt in that they actually rewrite the text, the interpretation they give to it, however, is equally distorted.

Furthermore, the Only True God’s sending forth (form of apostellw), firmly mounts the expression onto the existing Hebrew notion of sh’liach. To send forth (shalach) immediately introduces the cultural norm and cognitive universe the Jews related to, namely agency.

To turn to the NT texts Mr Taylor reference, the above conclusion is also reached by necessity,

1 Thess. 1:9, 10 “For they keep reporting on how we came in among you and how you turned to God from your false gods to slave for a living and true God, and to wait *for his son* from the heavens, whom he resurrected from the dead, *namely, Jesus* who delivers us from the wrath which is coming.”

A clear distinction is drawn between the True God, and the other, namely Jesus, who is the True God’s son, whom the True God also resurrected, someone other than the True God.

1 Joh. 5:20, 21 “But we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us the mental ability to gain the knowledge of the *True One*. And we are in *the True One* by means of his Son Jesus Christ. This is the *True God* and life everlasting. Little children, guard yourselves from idols.”

Again the clear distinction between the True One, or True God and His son. His son is the means by which we are “in the True One.” All these necessitate separateness or distinction between the respective “Someones.”

The title, Only True God, by definition excludes anyone else from the definition. No one will argue that there were other “someones” included in the title, only-begotten Son. The mere notion of having others besides Jesus also called “only-begotten Son of God” sounds preposterous. No amount of sophistry will have us arrive at such a conclusion. Neither should it be in the case of the “Only True God.”

In fact, Jude 1:4 states that the Lord Jesus is our only Master (despotes) but according to Acts 4:24 the Father is also our Master (despotes). If one insists that the Lord Jesus is not the true God based on John 17:3 then so too the Father is not our Master according to Jude 1:4.

Between the two opposing fields, the Biblical Unitarians are the ones not committing the fallacy of undistributed middle. Two completely different contexts with two completely different senses in which Jesus and God are our Masters. Even humans can be owners or masters (1 Tim. 6:1, 2, Tit. 2:9). This is a false analogy, since “Only True God” was a title given to the Sovereign of the Universe alone, and not remotely as commonplace as “despotes” used of husbands, slave-owners or rulers and anthropomorphically applied to Jehovah and Jesus, also in specific senses. This in no way violates the BU position: not hermeneutically, contextually, or semantically.

In fact, the Jude reference exists in a letter Jude himself concludes, saying,

“To the *Only God our Saviour* through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, might and authority for all past eternity and now and into all eternity, Amen.”

Jude’s understanding confirms the BU position that the Sovereign Lord, the Only God, acted through someone else, namely Jesus. Another confirmation of Biblical agency.

b. Functional subjection does not necessitate ontological inferiority. The wife is to subject herself to her husband but she is equally a person as him (Ephesians 5:24).

Jesus’ inability to do beyond what the Father granted him to do, or to reach the divine truths outside the Father’s teaching, by definition violates the notion that he is Almighty and All-knowing. This inability reflects his inferiority (Isaiah 40:13, 14). What is more, Jesus acted out of obedience (Heb. 5:8). This again necessitates someone superior to be obedient to. Our understanding of ontology (largely Hellenistic) is unfortunately not the Hebraic understanding thereof. Ontology was reflected in activity or functionality. This gave the actor a measure of glory. It is at best a futile exercise to determine a concept from a cognitive world, using a foreign model to do it.

c. The Lord Jesus has a Father and God because He is also a man. That in no way proves He can’t be God as well.

No, it does, else the anthropomorphism would be redundant. It shows an inequality and distinction in age, glory, ability, authority and wisdom. “God” is no inheritable or dispensable quality like “theios.” God (ho theos) is an identity Jesus himself said belongs to the Father alone (Joh 17:3).

The usage of certain English words has, unfortunately, been exploited by many a theologian. I can, for instance, say, Batman was “a man.” He would thus be part of a class belonging to men. I can also say, Batman was “man,” indicating his qualities or properties making him eligible to be included in the class of men. But, to say, Batman was “the man,” would definitely identify him as someone specific from among the class of “man.”

This is exactly where, especially Trinitarians, have made use of the ambiguity of language. In the Bible, someone alone can be identified as THE God. That is Yahweh, or Jehovah (Deut. 6:4, Act. 3:13). To say, therefore, that someone is “God,” Biblically speaking, would be to identify someone specific as “ho theos.” The shrewd communicator, however, has also used the word, “God,” in a qualitative sense, much as we would say, Batman was “man,” or Australopithecus was “man.” The ambiguity is favorable to the Trinitarian apologist, since, to say, “Jesus is also God,” gives a qualitative or adjectival nuance to the word “God,” while simultaneously providing a basis to exploit the other alternative in the linguistic ambiguity, namely, that he was THE God – to an inappropriate extent applied to Jesus. The aim, however, is rather to gradually incorporate Jesus into THE GOD, ho theos in the absolute sense, which cannot be, since Scripture identifies Someone else as that. The ambiguity in language usage nevertheless turns the concept “God” interchangeably between Someone and a quality, depending on which angle they approach it from – a linguistic game nowhere to be found in Scripture.

f. Colossians 2:9

I’m not sure why Danny cited this passage when it teaches the very opposite of what he is trying to affirm.

Other references to “divinity” or “divine quality” or “deity” indicate that this notion in itself does not prove that Jesus Christ is the Only True God. The Only True God is such exactly because of His superiority and Sovereignty in all respects throughout time. This is NOT the case with Jesus.

Col. 1:19 “because God saw fit for all fullness to dwell in him.”

This again denies Jesus’ “Divinity” (however linguistically vague this term is), as Mr Taylor and some Trinitarians want to use it. Linguistically, this involves a recipient of divine glory other than, not the Father (as Trinitarians will most readily admit), but, as the text says, someone other than God. God decided for Jesus to have divinely endowed fullness dwell in Jesus. This fullness is thus temporally limited and contingent upon God seeing fit to give fullness to Jesus. This receiving of godly quality is a concept diametrically at odds with the Bible’s presentation of the Almighty God who has always been unequalled in His ability and glory belonging to the Only True God.

In fact, even we as worshippers have the privilege of having this fullness dwell in us!

Eph. 3:19 “...that you may be **filled with all the fullness that God gives.**”

This was, not only the teaching of Paul, but also of Peter:

1 Pet. 1:4 “Through these things he has freely granted us the precious and grand promises, that through these you may become **partakers in divine nature**, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

No one would argue that any of us would become God when we receive all Godly-endowed fullness or fully partake in divine nature...except, of course, if you're a Mormon...

g. Citing Psalm 110:1 and Matthew 22:43-44 Danny asserted that Jesus “is a lesser individual from Jehovah”. If that doesn't constitute an assertion without proof I don't know what does.

It goes without saying...

In my hectic schedule, I pray to keep up with this debate as much as possible.

In Christ,

Jaco

8. *on 24 Aug 2010 at 5:19 pm*8 Jaco

Danny,

To add to what you said on Joh. 5:26, 6:53 indicates that even we as Jesus' followers can have life in ourselves!!!

Jaco

9. *on 25 Aug 2010 at 1:21 am*9 Marc Taylor

Thank you for your post. There is only Master in heaven for the Christian. god/lord/master can all apply to mere humans.

10. *on 25 Aug 2010 at 12:02 pm*10 Jaco

Good day,

Thank you for your post. There is only Master in heaven for the Christian. god/lord/master can all apply to mere humans.

I am not sure how the above statement will be used as a premise for an obvious conclusion. It is factually correct that we have only one Lord God (Adonai Elohim). We have been given, though, the Lord Messiah (Adohn Meshiach), someone distinct and separate from, not only the Father (which, by the careful use of philosophical terms, Trinitarians admit), but from **YHWH Himself**:

Act. 2:36 “Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Chris, this Jesus whom ye crucified.”

Act. 3:13 “The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers [Jehovah], hath glorified his Servant, Jesus...”

Act. 5:31 “Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. ”

In fact, the word “Servant” in Act. 3:13, 26 and 4:30 is a form of *paidos*’, literally meaning “child” and in certain contexts, “servant.” The nuance of inferiority belonging to a child is so predominant as that would naturally form an integral part of the cognitive associations made by *paidos*’.

Furthermore, in heaven, more than only Jesus and Jehovah are called “Kyrios” or “Master.” In the Apocalypse, one of the **elders** is answered with,

“My Lord, you know.” *ho kyrie mou, su oidas* (7:14)

The identity of Kyrios is in no way as reductionistic as arbitrarily meaning, God Almighty - not even in heaven...

Jesus, Adoni, is a Lord (Messiah) different from and inferior to Jehovah, Adonai, the Lord (God Almighty).

In Christ,

Jaco

11. on 25 Aug 2010 at 7:23 pm¹¹ Marc Taylor

There is only one despotes for the Christian in heaven. To whom does it apply? Yes there is more than one kurios in heaven (Revelation 7:14) this is why the Lord Jesus is referred to as the Lord of lords. One Lord of all lords.

12. on 28 Aug 2010 at 10:11 am¹² Jaco

Mr Taylor

Firstly, no one can argue from an anthropomorphic perspective, that the title “Master” in itself proves necessarily that the bearer of the title is God Almighty. The invention of the proviso, “in heaven,” changes nothing and amounts to special pleading and a slippery slope, since location does not confer status upon someone beyond what the title (“master”) does. This anthropomorphic designation used to be as commonplace as “lord.” Having more than one lord – in the workplace, in heaven and in the highest of heavens – in no way changes the

truth that we have one Lord (Messiah), and One Lord God, Yahweh. The same goes for “despotes.”

As with the Lord Jesus, one can only go as far as saying:

If one of the 24 elders were the Only True God, he would have been called “Lord.”

To draw a valid and sound logical conclusion, one can only go as far as affirming the antecedent or denying the consequent.

Secondly, Jude’s presentation of Jesus is clearly shown to be a mediatory role. In this expressly stated relational frame should we understand in what sense is Jesus “our only Owner.” In no way does this expression jeopardize the clearly hierarchical scheme with the Father, Jehovah, the Only True God as the Head, and the Lord Messiah, Jesus Christ as our immediate Master:

Jude 4 “...to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power and authority for all past ages and now and into all ages. Amen.”

This is also the case with the Acts reference you give. The Master Lord (despotes kyrios) is the Father, the Creator, and the Only True God of Jesus. This is confirmed by:

Acts 2:33 “Therefore because he *was exalted to the right hand of God* and *received the promised holy spirit from the Father*, he has poured out this which you see and hear.”

Acts 2:36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know for a certainty that *God made him both Lord and Christ*, this Jesus whom you impaled.”

Acts 3:13 “The *God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our forefathers* [Jehovah, the Creator], has glorified his Servant, Jesus, whom you, for your part, delivered up and disowned before Pilate’s face, when he had decided to release him.”

In Acts 4:24, 27, 29, 30 the apostles prayed:

“*Master Lord*, you are the One who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them...And so, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with people of the nations and wit peoples of Israel were in actuality gathered together in this city against *your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed*. And now, o Lord, give attention to their threats, and grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand for healing and while signs and portents occur through the name of *your holy servant, Jesus*.”

The One identified as He who created everything is Yahweh (Jehovah) also by Paul, in 17:24

“The God that made the world and all the things in it, being, as this One is, Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in handmade temples...For by Him we have life and move and exist, even as certain ones of the poets among you have said, ‘For we are also his progeny.’ Because he as set a day in which he purposes to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he as furnished a guarantee to all men in that he has resurrected him from the dead.”

From these texts it is clear that the “despotes” in Jude is not the same as the “despotes kyrios” in Second Luke. Taken together, then, the “Despotes Kyrios” (Jehovah) saved us through our only “despotes,” Jehovah’s servant, a man, the son of the Only True God, the Lord Messiah, Jesus Christ. While sin used to be our “despotes,” we belong to another “despotes” who bought us with a price. Since this salvation came from The Only True God, He, Jehovah, is our Despotes Kyrios. Clearly, then, we have more than one Owner in different senses.

To go beyond that is in no way different than saying,

We have one Lord in heaven, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 8:6).

One of the 24 elders was called “Lord” (Rev. 7:14)

Ergo, one of the 24 elders must be God.

If not, then for the very same reason(s) the one Master of us, Jesus Christ will not be the same as our Master Lord, Jehovah. Different Masters in different senses.

Thirdly, it is a false analogy to compare John 17:3’s use of the complex Name, “Only True God” to “Despotes” in Jude and Luke. The conclusion, that there is only one Despotes in heaven, requires full de-contextualizing of the references and committing the fallacy of undistributed middle. Not so with the title, “God Almighty.” While many different entities can bear the titles Kyrios or Despotes, only one Someone can bear the title of God Almighty. Jesus expressly stated who that was, namely, his Father, and he also stated what his relation was to God Almighty, namely that of apostle or sh’liach. One arrives at your conclusion, Mr Taylor, only through the committing of logical and structural fallacies, disregarding immediate and extended context, and divorcing the text from its cultural frame and linguistic range.

In Christ,

Jaco

1st Trinitarian Constructive (2a)

August 24th, 2010 by Marc Taylor

This is the third post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



1. That the Lord Jesus is the First and the Last necessitates that He is Almighty God in that He always existed.

a. Brown: The formula “the first and the last” is only found as a self-designation of the exalted Christ (1:17; 2:8; 22:13). This goes back to the Heb. wording of the divine predicates in Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12. In the Gk. translation of this expression the LXX has avoided the divine title of *eschatos* and uses a paraphrase instead, perhaps because of negative undertones. The formula belongs essentially to the synonymous phrases “the Alpha and the Omega” (Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13; Alpha being the first, and Omega the last letter of the Gk. alphabet), and “the beginning and the end” (22:13). The application of these divine predicates to the exalted Christ means the ascription to him of a rank equal with God’s with the attribution of the functions of Creator and Perfecter (NIDNTT 2:58, 59, Goal).

b. Kittel: A more common antithesis in the NT is *prwtos/ esxatos*. The exalted Christ is *ho prwtos kai ho esxatos* in Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 22:13; the reference here is to the beginning and the end. *ho prwtos* refers to pre-existence, being in eternity before all time, while *ho esxatos* refers to being in eternity after all time (TDNT 6:867, *prwtos*).

c. NIDOTTE: Occasionally used with its antonym (“last”), this adj. forms a merism typical in Sem. languages, in which polar extremes describe totality. In Isaiah’s expression of monotheism, Yahweh is both “the first” and “the last”, meaning the only (probably an enumeration in which he is the only number, Isa 44:6, and see also 41:4; Neh 8:18; Rev 1:8) (3:1027, *rishown*)

d. Thayer: the eternal One, Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 22:13 (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, *prwtos*, page 554).

e. Vine: of Christ as the Eternal One, Rev. 1:17 (in some mss. ver. 11); 2:8; 22:13 (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Last, page 641).

2. The fact that the Lord Jesus is Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14; 19:16) necessitates that He is Almighty God in that YHWH shares this same appellation (Deuteronomy 10:17) with Him in heaven at the same time.

a. There is only one (singular) Lord of all lords (plural) in heaven at this time. To whom does it apply? If it only refers to the Father then that contradicts Revelation chapters 17

and 19 where it refers to the Lord Jesus. If it only refers to the Lord Jesus then that would make the Lord Jesus “Lord” of the Father since the Father is referred to as Lord (Acts 4:29).

b. Neither option bodes well for those who insist that the Lord Jesus is not Almighty God. The truth of Scripture reveals that this appellation equally refers to both YHWH and the Lord Jesus. That this is the case the TDNT refers to this as Christ’s “divine equality” with God (TDNT 5:273, *onoma*). Thayer cites both Revelation 19:16 and Deuteronomy 10:17 saying it refers to the “Supreme Lord” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, *kurios*, page 366).

Supreme means - 1. highest in rank or authority; paramount; sovereign; chief 2. of the highest quality, degree, character, importance, etc. 3. greatest, utmost, or extreme (Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, *supreme*, page 1430).

c. Agency: Those who insist that this is simply a case of “Agency” will often appeal to the relationship between Pharaoh and Joseph (Genesis 41:40-44). In Genesis 41:40 however we see that Pharaoh will still be greater than Joseph in his throne. That is not anything like the equality concerning “Lord of lords” (i.e. Supreme Lord) as mentioned in Revelation and Deuteronomy. Whereas Pharaoh was the “supreme” (greatest, utmost) ruler of Egypt Joseph was not. In fact, according to Genesis 41:43 Joseph rode in “the second chariot” not the first one with Pharaoh showing he wasn’t equal. The Hebrew word for “second” is *mishneh* and Gesenius’s Lexicon defines it as “the second rank, the second place”. Along with Genesis 41:43 2 Kings 25:18 is also cited demonstrating that the second priest Zephaniah is not equal with the first priest Seraiah. Here as with Pharaoh and Joseph there remains a distinction cancelling out “equality”.

3. Praying to/worshiping the Lord Jesus proves that He is Almighty God (See 4c below). Some of the passages where this takes place is Acts 1:24, 25; 7:59; Romans 10:13 and Revelation 22:3.

a. In Acts 1:24 the Lord Jesus receives *proseuxomai* which is due unto God alone.

1. Kittel: From the very first *proseuxesthai* means calling on God, whereas it is not always clear to whom the request is directed when *desthai* is used (TDNT 2:807, *proseuxomai*).

2. Louw/Nida: to speak to or to make requests of God - ‘to pray, to speak to God, to ask God for, prayer.’ (Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains, 33.178, *Pray* - *euxomai*; *proseuxomai*; *euxee*, *proseuxee*, page 409).

3. Mounce: The fact that people pray to both God (Mt. 6:9) and Jesus (Acts 1:24) is part of the proof of Jesus’ deity (Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words, *pray*, page 531).

4. Thayer: The noted linguist Professor Grimm wrote concerning *proseuxee* that it “is a word of sacred character, being limited to prayer to God” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, *deesis*, page 126).

5. Vine: concerning proseuxomai writes that it: “is always used of prayer to God” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Pray, page 871) .

b. In Acts 7:59 Stephen prayed that the Lord Jesus would receive his spirit and the Jews knew that their spirit would return “unto the God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

c. In Romans 10:13 Paul applies YHWH of Joel 2:32 directly to the Lord Jesus to be called upon.

d. In Revelation 22:3 we see that the Lamb is the recipient of latreuw which is due unto God alone.

1. Kittel: The ministry denoted by latreuein is always offered to God (or to heathen gods...R. 1:25...Ac. 7:42) (TDNT 4:62, latreuw).

2. Moulton and Milligan: in Biblical Greek always refers to the service of the true God or of heathen deities (The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, WM.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, copyright 1982, page 371).

3. Moises Silva: As used in the New Testament, the word latreuw denotes actions that are always evaluated positively when God is the grammatical object and negatively with reference to any other object (Karen H. Jobes in Moises Silva’s “Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics”, copyright 1994 revised and expanded edition from 1983, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, page 203).

4. The Messenger of YHWH is Almighty God.

a. The Hebrew word for angel means “messenger” (mal’ak). It could refer to supernal beings (Psalm 148:2) or to people (Joshua 7:22) or in fact to YHWH Himself. This Messenger although being YHWH is also distinct from YHWH (Exodus 23:20-23; 2 Samuel 24:16; cf. 1 Chronicles 21).

b. In Genesis 48:16 Jacob states, The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads ; And may my name live on in them, And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac ; And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

c. No one but God alone should be prayed to for no one but the omniscient God would be capable of hearing this prayer (along with all others directed to Him) and no one but the omnipotent God would be able to act on what was requested of Him.

d. Not only does the Messenger have YHWH’s name “in him” (Exodus 23:21) - in a sense so do Michael (“Who is like God”) and Gabriel (“man of God”) - but His very name is YHWH (Hosea 12:3-5).

6 Responses to “1st Trinitarian Constructive (2a)”

1. *on 28 Aug 2010 at 10:14 am*¹ *Frank D*

There was a reference made to controversies in the early church and I tried to go back and find the comment but was unsuccessful. (I think Jaco brought it up).

If the doctrine of the Trinity was adhered to by Paul and the early church, where is the controversy with the Jews? Doesn't history show us that this controversy didn't arise until Hellenistic interpretation entered into the church? It came to it's head and Constantine called the Counsel of Nicea. This 'counsel vote' bounced back and forth over the next 50 years or so with many books burned and people martyred. This was all put to rest not by revelation from God but by the blood of saints and fear.

As was stated in the comment I could not find, there was no controversy in the New Testament. But, when it arose, it was not accomplished by spreading the Good News but rather by the acts of who I would accuse of doing the work of the adversary.

So, how can the doctrine of the trinity be viewed as scriptural when even trinitarians admit it was developed post-Pauline?

<http://kingdomready.org/blog/2008/01/31/evolution-of-the-creeds/>

Thoughts?

2. *on 28 Aug 2010 at 2:06 pm*² *Ray*

Should we ask ourselves if the Trinity doctrine is absolutely the express concept of God given to us from the Bible?

I am one who says in answer to that question, No. I do not believe that it is.

Should the conception of the Trinity be an absolute imposition upon another by any one of us? My answer to that is No. I do not believe that it should be so.

Is the acceptance of the Trinity doctrine by all people the absolute and perfect will of God? My answer to that is No. I do not believe that it is.

Might Jesus say, “I am God.” and leave the interpretation of that to those born of the spirit of God? Yes. That is my opinion.

Is it robbery if Jesus says, “I am the Almighty God.”? No, not in my opinion.

3. *on 28 Aug 2010 at 2:10 pm*³ *Ray*

I would like to add one word to my first answer in post 3 above, and that is the word “necessarily”, which is to say that I do not believe that the doctrine of the Trinity is necessarily the absolute express concept of God given to us by the Bible.

I am one that does not feel right about putting his name on the doctrine.

4. *on 28 Aug 2010 at 2:11 pm4 Ray*

...That is I would not want to put his name on the doctrine....necessarily.

5. *on 28 Aug 2010 at 3:43 pm5 Sean*

Frank D,

On early Christian controversies recorded in the NT and conspicuous absence of a trinitarian controversy, **click here** to see a post from a while back.

6. *on 29 Aug 2010 at 10:22 am6 Frank D*

Thanks, Sean.

Rebuttal (2b)

August 28th, 2010 by Danny Dixon

This is the fourth post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



Thanks, Marc.

First and Last

Let's start by noting the weight of the instances that have Jesus calling himself "the First and the Last" in the book of Revelation, associating that designation as following his death and resurrection.

God cannot die (1 Timothy 1:17). The Trinitarian presupposition that Jesus was a mortal God-man can be read back onto the biblical text, but these are more naturally explained as speaking of Jesus who had a beginning when God gave him life (John 5:26; 6:57). He is not eternal. However, "First and Last" is a designation that only applies to Christ in Revelation, and it does so twice (1:17-18; 2:8). Revelation talks about Christ being first, calling Jesus the 'firstborn from the dead' in Revelation 1:5. This fits the immediate context and the way that John looks at things overall.

Revelation 2:8 also remains connected to the resurrection in mentioning Jesus' authority over life and death, and Smyrna is told that in facing persecution and death perhaps, they should consider Christ's example and rejoice that he can give them the crown of life and rescue them from the second death (2:10-11). Furthermore, Revelation 22:13 stresses that this designation is, foundationally a title of authority. And it is connected with Christ's role as judge at the end of the age. While the ground for this prerogative isn't mentioned directly in the verse, in the context of the overall book, there is a clear connection to the fact that Jesus has been victorious over death (See Revelation 2:26-27; 5:5-7).

That the three titles stand in Revelation 22:13 isn't necessarily justification that they are one theological statement with one theological truth. God begins and ends creation (Revelation 4:11; 21:66). Christ is first and last as he stands before the church. As to the theological dictionaries and lexicons defining the terms *protos* and *eschatos*, the Bible doesn't present "first and last" as meaning "the eternal one" (the one without a beginning).

Lord of Lords

Jesus is "Lord" because God made him "Lord." In Marc's rebuttal point 3e he mentions that Luke 2:11 indicates that Jesus already was Lord. What Marc fails to recognize is that Luke 2:11 does not indicate when Jesus became Lord. And that wouldn't matter anyway, because God *made* Jesus to be Lord. That is the clear teaching of Matthew 28:18 and

Acts 2:36. God does not need to be given authority in heaven or on earth. And God certainly cannot be *made* Lord.

As to Jesus being Lord of lords, this sort of language is applied to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2:37, but he isn't "Almighty God" even though they "share the same appellation." Daniel begins: "O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory." Notice, Nebuchadnezzar is, like God and Jesus, called "king of kings." Nebuchadnezzar was king over neither Jesus nor God, yet he was the most powerful king on earth based on the kingship that God gave to him. Marc cites the *New International Dictionary of the New Testament Theology* which translates *Kurios* as "Yahweh." In commentary the Dictionary applies this designation to Jesus in Philippians 2:9 where it is supposed to denote "divine equality." This is sheer interpretative theology based upon a preconception from later Trinitarian development. H. Bietenhard writes in the same Dictionary:

[The] NT church did not reflect on the relationship of the exalted Christ to God the Father as did later church doctrinal teaching. One may perhaps say that there is indeed no developed doctrine of the Trinity in the NT, but that the writers, particularly in the later strata, thought in Trinitarian forms. (*NIDNTT*_II:516_ "Lord")

J. Schneider also writes:

The NT does not contain the developed doctrine of the Trinity. [Quoting Karl Barth]: "The Bible lacks the express declaration that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are of equal essence and therefore in an equal sense God himself. And the other express declaration is also lacking, that God is God thus and only thus, i.e. as Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." (*NIDNTT*_II:84_ "God")

Jesus' kingship was limited inasmuch as God, the highest king of all, gave it to him. Similarly, Jesus is king of kings and lord of lords because God gave him that authority (So says Jesus also in Revelation 2:27). Again, the only exception to this is God who gave Christ this authority, as directly taught in Scripture (1 Corinthians 15:27). There is no contradiction between Revelation chapters 17 and 19 which refer to the Lord Jesus and Acts 4:29. In Acts 4, the Father is referred to as the Sovereign Lord in the context.

Marc repeatedly fails to correctly grasp the biblical concept of agency, particularly as it is related in the kings in the Davidic dynasty. We should never forget that the Father-Son relationship, the relationship between the Almighty God and his Son the king, whoever that king might be in the Davidic line, was eternal within the dynasty as established in 2 Samuel 7:12-16. Jehovah talks to Adoni in Psalm 110:1. This is a troubling passage for anyone who sees Yahweh/Jehovah as being the same person as the diminutive entity. Adonai is not Adoni. Yahweh is not "my Lord." God is not himself Servant/Child (Greek *Pais* in Acts 4:27). Other Trinitarian scholars note that

it is preferable to retain the text and take this statement as another instance of the royal hyperbole that permeates the royal psalms. Because the Davidic king is God's vice-regent

on earth, the psalmist addresses him as if he were God incarnate. God energizes the king for battle and accomplishes justice through him. A similar use of hyperbole appears in Isa 9:6, where the ideal Davidic king of the eschaton is given the title “Mighty God.” (*N.E.T. Bible* note 2 at Psalm 45:6,)

Prayer and *latreuo*

God’s king represents God and is addressed as God. Indeed he can even receive prayer. People marveled at the authority he had received in Jesus’ ministry (Matthew 9:5). In fact all authority has been given to the Son proving that what Jesus said is true, namely, that he had been given “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18), which would logically include the authority to be the recipient of prayer and supplication. In fact prayer as *proseuchomai* is not only offered to God, but as H. Schonweiss has written, “NT prayer is addressed to God or to Jesus” (NIDNTT_II:867_“Prayer”).

Additionally, note that nothing in Romans 10:13 indicates that Paul “applies Yahweh of Joel 2:32 directly to the Lord Jesus to be called upon.” Paul is simply quoting Joel and simply reiterating (through his quotation) the need to call on the LORD/Jehovah in order to be saved. Or he is using the Joel quotation in a translation that had “Lord,” not “Yahweh,” and applying it to Christ since “the Lord” (not ‘Yahweh’) language now fittingly applies to Christ based on his Messianic authority.

According to D. Steenburg, *latreuo* in early Christian literature demonstrates why Christ, who is not God, can receive worship. Regarding the thought that nowhere “do we find any suggestion that the worship of any exalted being other than God alone was admissible, let alone actual,” he observes that because “Adam had been worshipped may have provided a crucial warrant for the worship of Christ.” He cites *latreuo* applied to Adam in The Sibylline Oracles:

587God speaking says, “Behold, let us make man
588In a *form* altogether like our own,
589And let us give him life-sustaining breath;
590Him being yet mortal all things of the world
591*Shall serve*, and unto him formed out of clay
592We will subject all things.”

Milton S. Terry, translator. *The Sibylline Oracles*, 8:587-592. (p. 62)

This partly demonstrates why *latreuo*, translated “serve” above, is used of a human. Steenburg says “that it accounts for the use of *morphe* [form]” because Adam is seen as being in the form *morphe* or image of God, justifying using *latreuo* of him. He then shows how this also accounts for Adam-Christ Christology found in Philippians 2:6-11.

Here, the pre-existent Christ, rejects the notion of grasping at equality with God but chooses to humble himself and become a human servant, willing to die on a cross. Thus he is given glory and honor for what he has done. (See D. Steenburg, “The Worship of

Adam and Christ as the Image of God,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 39 [1990], pp. 96-97).

Yahweh’s Messenger is Almighty God?

Please note that “Rabbinic Judaism in the time of Jesus clearly recognized the function of the representative or proxy derived from the old Semitic law concerning messengers. It is expressed briefly in the principle found in the *Mishnah*, Muller writes, ‘A man’s agent (*shaluach*) is like himself’ (Berakoth 5:5, and others).” (NIDNTT_I:127-128, “Apostle.”) But the messenger/angel of God is not God himself, or else, what would be the point of calling him God’s “messenger”?

Danny Dixon

28 Responses to “Rebuttal (2b)”

1. on 29 Aug 2010 at 8:15 pm1 Danny André Dixon

In my Rebuttal 2b at the section “Prayer and *Latreuo*,” I wrote: “People marveled at the authority he had received in Jesus’ ministry (Matthew 9:5).” that sentence could better have been expressed as follows:

“People marvelled at the authority Jesus had received in his ministry (Matthew 9:5).”

I’m sure there are other errors like this that appear from time to time, and some of them either offend the ear or befuddle the theology I am trying to express. In the latter cases, I hope I will find and correct them; I’m likely to let the other cases slide. 😊

Danny Dixon

2. on 31 Aug 2010 at 3:26 am2 Jaco

Mr Dixon,

Thank you for your good Rebuttal. I’d like to add my bit, if I may.

Latreuo

Latreuo was used in Biblical times to denote service – either religiously or generally. In the NT it is shown to be the case where sacred service is rendered to God, Jehovah, alone. All of the 21 occurrences show latreuo to be rendered to God alone.

Now, one could argue that, if Jesus were to receive latreuo (which I contend he doesn't), the norm of sh'liach would still be a formidable obstacle to face for proponents of the Trinity doctrine. The text cited by Mr. Taylor in his constructive, namely Rev. xxii.3 requires some attention:

kai o thronos tou theou kai tou arniou en auti estai and the throne of God and of the lamb in her will be

kai oi doulai autou **latreusousin autw**
and the servants of him **shall serve to him**

From the above alone, no one can in any way insist that the latreuo was rendered to the Lamb, Christ Jesus. The "auto" or "to him" could mean either God or Christ. The bulk of evidence from the NT, however, will leave us with no choice but to settle with latreuo being rendered to God. In the Apocalypse, doulai or bondservants were shown to be such either in the general sense, of the Beast, or God's. Latreuo gives no support to the Trinity whatsoever. In fact, it is yet another obstacle against it.

Proseuchomai

Proseuchomai, or prayerful worship, could also, in the setting of sh'liach, be performed to Jehovah's representative. Although I think proskyneo would have been the word given to that act instead. What baffles me, however, is that Mr Taylor gives this as evidence for his position, while in fact it proves the opposite, since proseuchomai was prayerful worship always rendered to Jehovah alone. The texts he cites are:

Acts 1:24 "And praying [proseuchomai] they said: Thou, O Lord, heart-knower of all, show which one out of these two did you select"

Acts 7:59 "and they stoned Stephen as he was calling upon [epikalew] and saying: O Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"

Maybe Mr Taylor could explain why he uses proseuchomai as evidence for his case, since proseuchomai is not used in Acts 7:59 where it is explicitly stated that Jesus is evoked or talked to. No one will argue that the Apostle John prayerfully worshipped the angel who appeared to him, since he was in vision communicating to the messenger. Why the argument in this case where Stephen communicates with the exalted Christ? Epikalew is a word, unfortunately for Trinitarians, not exclusively limited to prayerful worship.

As can be clearly seen, Acts 1:24 uses proseuchomai in prayerful worship to Kyrios. We know that, among the Hebrew Names rendered Kyrios in Greek, the apostles could either have used Jehovah, Adonai, or Adohn. Both LORD (God) and Lord (Messiah) were rendered "Kyrios" in Greek. Citing this text proves

nothing in the case for the Trinity, since the insistence on worshipful prayer to Jesus is an inference with no conclusive evidence whatsoever. In fact, the One to choose apostleship in the case of “the twelve,” is most probably the same One Jesus implored for guidance:

Luke 6:12: “And in the progress of those days, he went out into the mountain to pray; and spent the whole night in prayer to **God**.”

Here, again, Someone else besides Jesus is called God. The evidence strongly points to Lord God Almighty as the Adonai or Kyrios called upon for selection of apostleship in Acts 1.

In Christ,

Jaco

3. *on 31 Aug 2010 at 8:28 am3 Sean*

Jaco,

Have you checked the LXX on Dan. 7.14?

καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς κατὰ γένη καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῷ **λατρεύουσα** καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος ἣτις οὐ μὴ ἀρθῇ καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ ἣτις οὐ μὴ φθαρῇ

And to him was given the dominion, and the honour, and the kingdom; and all nations, tribes, and languages, shall **serve** him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed.

This seems to be the one instance in all of Scripture where λατρεύω is used of a non-deity.

4. *on 31 Aug 2010 at 11:22 pm4 Karl*

Hey Sean,

Just wanted to mention that you quoted the Old LXX, which is fairly poor translation of the Masorite text. It is difficult to see how the translator even arrived at this translation when it is compared to the Hebrew original. For this reason, Christians throughout the centuries have used Theodotion's Greek text instead of the Old LXX version. Theodotion's more literal translation reads:

14 καὶ αὐτῷ ἐδόθη ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ βασιλεία, καὶ πάντες οἱ λαοί, φυλαί, γλῶσσαι αὐτῷ δουλεύουσιν· ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἣτις οὐ παρελεύσεται, καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ οὐ διαφθαρήσεται.

Notice the use δουλευω instead of λατρεύω. Your english rendering of Daniel 7:14 does not appear to be a translation of the greek text you quoted. Rather, that english text would be a better translation of Theodotion's text. I'm curious, how you would translate the Old LXX text yourself? (... "all glory serving him" ..?)

Just trying to keep you on your toes 😊

5. on 01 Sep 2010 at 2:53 am5 Danny Dixon

Karl:

I think you miss the point. It isn't so much an issue of which is the best text for Daniel 7:14. The point of the matter is of whether writers of the time could see clear to use the terminology of an entity who was not considered to be God Almighty.

The Greek author behind the text that Sean quoted was familiar enough with the language to know that the word *could so be used* with the Hebrew word *bd*.

I am thinking that that was Sean's purpose in bringing up the passage.

Danny Dixon

6. on 01 Sep 2010 at 10:02 am6 Danny Dixon

Sean:

Just wondering: is the subscription to posts link broken?

Danny

7. on 01 Sep 2010 at 1:31 pm7 Marc Taylor

Those who deny that Christ is God will either affirm that Christ can be prayed to/worshiped but this doesn't necessitate that He is God (such is the position of the Iglesia Ni Cristo church) or that there are no passages where Christ is prayed to/worshiped in that prayer is due to God alone (such is the position of the Jehovah's Witnesses).

I am willing to have another debate where one could affirm that only God is to be prayed to/worshiped. I would intend on using Acts 1:24 and Revelation 22:3 for my position (perhaps others as well).

8. *on 01 Sep 2010 at 2:48 pm*8 Sean

Karl,

I merely quoted the LXX along with Brenton's translation. I'm surprised the two don't match, but you are definitely right. In fact, I find the LXX difficult to translate. I came up with something like "all serving glory to him" or "all glory being served to him" "...not quite sure what to do with the participle here.

Danny,

The subscribe to posts link at the top of this page works fine for me...I just clicked on it and it worked (try firefox or IE but not Chrome)

9. *on 01 Sep 2010 at 4:05 pm*9 Karl

Hey Sean,

I merely quoted the LXX along with Brenton's translation. I'm surprised the two don't match...

That's because Brenton is not translating the LXX version of Daniel, he is translating Theodotion's version. Theodotion's text is one I quoted above.

I also find the LXX text difficult to translate and I cannot see how the translator came up with his translation based on the Aramaic text. LXX Daniel is full of problems like these which is why it was abandoned in favor of Theodotion's version by the early Christians. Some have even speculated that LXX Daniel was translating a different text, not our present Hebrew/Aramaic text, that's why there are so many differences.

Hello Danny,

Great job on the debate so far. My comment to Sean was more of a personal nature and didn't have much to do with the debate. I was trying to get him to double check what he wrote since he is an advanced greek student after all.

I made a mistake earlier. The LXX translator and Theodotion were actually translating from Aramaic, not Hebrew. So there is no use of the Hebrew word "bd" (דבע) in the passage. The root used is actually "PLH" (חלפ).

10. *on 01 Sep 2010 at 10:07 pm*10 Danny Dixon

Oh, okay. Thanks for the correction!

11. *on 02 Sep 2010 at 7:38 am*11 Jaco

Hi there,

Sorry for my delay in answering.

The LXX interlinear I have has *douleusousin* for *pelach'*. And, yes, it is the critical major text by Theodotion. Upon comparing LXXTh with LXXOG, of Daniel, I found huge differences in translation!

Yes, Karl, I agree with you that *pelach'* in Aramaic was used. The Targums have translated *abad* in various places as *pelach'*. BDB has it:

1) To serve, worship, revere, minister for, pay reverence to.

1a) (Peal.)

1a1) to pay reverence to.

1a2) to serve.

Theodotion translated *pelach'* in various other places as *douleusosin*.

My reference initially was to *latreuo* in the NT, since translational opinion may not have played such a prominent role there as it might have been with the LXX. From a theological perspective Jesus' companions and their pupils undoubtedly had a much better understanding of who he really was than the translators/copiists of the LXX.

The only persons I found to have made a major issue out of LXXOG's rendering of LXXDan were the anti-Islamist, Sam Shamoun, and (if I'm not mistaken) Trinitarians Rob Bowman and Ed Komoszewski.

Mr Taylor,

I do not think that mentioning spec. Christian sects is appropriate. Regardless of who believes what, the theological issues at hand need to be addressed. The sects you mention have a reputation of various sensitive issues. I couldn't care less what they believe. If Nordic mythology has Odin die on the Yggdrasil to save the world, so be it. Jesus died for my sins, and that is the Biblical truth, regardless of the similarities this has with other religions.

Jaco

12. on 02 Sep 2010 at 4:35 pm¹² Marc Taylor

Mentioning the sects is appropriate for that is what they believe. Stop making a big deal out of nothing. Despite your corrective tone you chose not to accept debating the topic of praying to/worshipping Christ.

13. on 02 Sep 2010 at 9:16 pm¹³ Lorna

When you say that the son is not “god” but “divine” based on one interpretation of John 1:1, are you saying he is a “DIVINE MAN”? Did the angels who presented themselves in human form to mankind from time to time—did they cease to be angels and become human because they took on the form of flesh when they visited earth? I mean this seems to be what I am understanding you to say of Jesus/Yeshua that when he was in heaven he was the word, but when he came to earth in the form of human flesh he was just a man—a divine one—but just a man. When he returned to heaven and took the throne at the right hand of god, he is a man is what I think I am understanding. So, once those angels who visited Hannah, etc in the form of flesh returned to the heavens, are they now men? The scriptures say that we entertain angels unaware, and I don’t think they were talking simply about a person delivering a message because we would KNOW when it was a PERSON delivering a message, do those angels who come in the form of flesh re-enter the heavenly with the status of “just a man” (with the possibility of divine status). I am trying to wrap my brain around the understand of man but divine. I mean Adam was created “in the image of god”; is he divine?

14. on 03 Sep 2010 at 12:25 am¹⁴ Danny Dixon

First of all, I am not basing my thoughts on *an interpretation* of John 1:1. I am basing it upon *the correct translation* of the passage. There are a couple of things I’d rather wait to see what Marc will say before I explain myself further. If he does not—and I *do* want to give him a chance to tackle John 1:1.

Second, I am *not* saying he is a divine man at present. He is an exalted man. He is what believers, those who are members of the new creation family can expect to be one day.

Jesus’ experience is a unique one to that of messengers who had come before. His mission to the earth required that he be a one of a kind entity. He was unlike the other prehuman sons of God. He was, as I pointed out in the Greek, *monogenes*. It would be improper to make comparisons of him and angels. The primary point of Hebrews 1:5-14 is that he was not like them.

I don’t know what the angels became when they came to deliver messages in human form or serve as ministering spirits. At least two angels in Genesis 18 are said to be men. As far as the Hannah-Samuel story is concerned, I had a little trouble finding the story of an angel appearing to her in human form. I do recall the Lord’s angel appearing to Samson’s mother and father and ascending into heaven in the flame of fire (Judges 13:15-20).

There is more detail regarding Jesus entrance into the earthly realm. He receives life as a human being as a result of the Holy Spirit’s action regarding her (Luke 1:35). On another note, whether the notion was mistaken or not, there was at least

speculation on the part of Jesus' disciples as to whether someone could have had a pre-earthly existence and then be born; interestingly, I don't think I've ever known any Mormons, who do believe in pre-mortal existence, to use John 9:1-2 to make their point. But it is an interesting verse that might be considered in trying to answer your question.

Again, please understand that I am *not* saying that Jesus was a divine man. I believe he divested himself of his divinity, as Philippians 2:6ff also teaches.

As to entertaining angels unaware, I have often felt inclined to help strangers, not because I thought they were angels sent to bring me a message, but that they were angels sent, perhaps, to teach me to be hospitable (Hebrews 13:2).

I guess I am trying to say that it is a Trinitarian error to try to wrap your mind around the idea of a human but divine. That's certainly not what I am trying to say. I am saying that The Word of God became a human by birth to Mary after having divested himself of his divinity that John 1:1c says that he had as one who was "a god"/"divine."

Adam was created in the image of God as a man. The image of God for him means he was God's representative on the earth with governing prerogatives on the earth as God's agent. Jesus serves in a similar role as God's Son with authority given to him to act on God's behalf in this world during his ministry (Matthew 9:5). Both Adam and Jesus are called *the* son/Son of God (John 3:16; Luke 3:38). Both Jesus and the first man are called "Adam" (Genesis 2:20; Luke 3:38; Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:45).

I appreciate your questions. Not sure if I answered adequately.

15. on 03 Sep 2010 at 5:28 am15 Lorna

1) You say that you are basing John 1:1 on the "correct" interpretation of the passage. Correct according to which scholar? I mean each scholar says their interpretation is correct, so I say "based on one interpretation of John 1:1". We know there are various manuscripts out there. The coptic, which I believe is where you are drawing your interpretation, is Egyptian with Egyptian influence simply written in Greek characters. What you are saying is akin to my saying that John 1:18 in which it says the only begotten god in the "oldest and best" greek manuscripts is the correct interpretation, but I am pretty sure you would not agree with this.

2) I want to understand you correctly. You are now saying that he is NOT divine? If he is that "word" that was "divine" as an "accurate" interpretation of John 1:1 according to the coptic, when did he cease to be divine, and what scriptures are you basing that on? I referring to the fact that you say there is an exalted man sitting at the right hand of god right now.

3) Why would it be “improper” to make comparisons of him and angels, when apparently you see it as proper to make comparisons of him and man. You say he was a man on earth, and now you say he is an exalted man in heaven which can be compared to what we will become. So, again, why is it improper to make comparisons of him leaving his “divinity” in heaven as the word, coming to earth to be a man, and then returning to heaven as an “exalted man” with that of angels leaving that “angelic form” in heaven as angels, coming to earth to be in the form of a man, and then asking if they then return to heaven as a man since that was the pattern for Jesus/Yeshua?

I quite agree he was “monogenes”, and “The primary point of Hebrews 1:5-14 is that he was not like them. (the angels)”

You say: “There is more detail regarding Jesus entrance into the earthly realm. He receives life as a human being as a result of the Holy Spirit’s action regarding her (Luke 1:35).” Since when is it necessary to have a simply human birth by the overshadowing of the holy spirit? Even when there were miracle birth in the “old testament”, god did not change the natural course of conception to bring forth humans—not in Sarah’s case, not in Hannah’s case. As a matter of fact some would say that the nephillim were a result of non-human interaction with humans which produced something other than simply a man. Yet, god the father in his administration sends his spirit to overshadow Miriam/Mary and he only gets a mere human?

You say: “As to entertaining angels unaware, I have often felt inclined to help strangers, not because I thought they were angels sent to bring me a message, but that they were angels sent, perhaps, to teach me to be hospitable (Hebrews 13:2).” I am glad you agree that these are angesls and not mere men. My point was that if we are entertaining these angels unaware or in human form, when they are done bringing the message in what form do they return to the heavenlies—as men or in some other form? A second point would be are they no longer angels, because you see them in the form of a man?

You say: “On another note, whether the notion was mistaken or not, there was at least speculation on the part of Jesus’ disciples as to whether someone could have had a pre-earthly existence and then be born...” I am not sure what you are talking about; I am assuming you mean Nicodemus, but I don’t want to stray from what I was talking about in my original post or bring the Mormons, who believe that men existed as “sparks” and will become “gods” into this at this point.

You say: “Again, please understand that I am not saying that Jesus was a divine man. I believe he divested himself of his divinity, as Philippians 2:6ff also teaches.” I agree that he divested himself as Phillipians teaches also. Which brings me to the question? What is your understanding of “divinity”? I mean is there some hierarchy of god, then divne or god-like, then arch angels, cherubim,

seraphim, messenger angels, then humans, or how do you see this “divine but not god?”

I will respond to the remainder of your response (to include anything that you seem to have missed) after some travel time. There are a couple of things that you have said that I find to challenge my position, so I will be circumspect and honest in my final resolve which I don't want to make until ?October? when the debate is complete.

16. on 03 Sep 2010 at 7:10 am 16 Lorna

According to the Lord Jesus Christ only God is to receive latreuo:

“Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship me.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Away from me, Satan! For it is written: “Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only (kai auto mono latreuseis).”’” Matthew 4:8-10 – cf. Luke 4:5-8

The book of Daniel was written in Aramaic. Notice the use of the word “pelach/worship” in Aramaic.

He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him (yipelachun). His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.” Daniel 7:13-14

“Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship (yipelachun) and obey him.” Daniel 7:27

“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve (pelachin) is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve (pelachin) your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.’” ... Then Nebuchadnezzar said, ‘Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king’s command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve (yipelachun) or worship any god except their own God.’” Daniel 3:16-18, 28 – cf. 3:12, 14; 6:16, 20

The Aramaic verb pelach, which is translated in the above texts as serve, refers to the cultic worship which is to be rendered to God alone. Moreover, the Greek translation of Daniel (e.g., the Septuagint [LXX]) uses the word latreuo for

pelach. In fact, here is a partial quotation from the Greek version of Daniel 7:9-28 by second century Christian apologist Justin Martyr:

But if so great a power is shown to have followed and to be still following the dispensation of His suffering, how great shall that be which shall follow His glorious advent! For He shall come on the clouds as the Son of man, so Daniel foretold, and His angels shall come with Him. These are the words: 'I beheld till the thrones were set; and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool. His throne was like a fiery flame, His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The books were opened, and the judgment was set. I beheld then the voice of the great words which the horn speaks: and the beast was beat down, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. And the rest of the beasts were taken away from their dominion, and a period of life was given to the beasts until a season and time. I saw in the vision of the night, and, behold, one like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven; and He came to the Ancient of days, and stood before Him. And they who stood by brought Him near; and there were given Him power and kingly honour, and all nations of the earth by their families, and all glory, serve Him (latreuosa).

In light of this it is therefore apparent that the Son of Man is a fully Divine Person otherwise he could not receive pelach/latreuo since that would be idolatry, e.g., rendering to a creature the worship and service due only to the Creator! As the following Evangelical scholars explain:

"... The book of Daniel contains a vision in which people of all nations, tribes, and languages 'serve' someone who is 'like a Son of Man' (Dan. 7:13 NASB)... In the Septuagint version of Daniel the word translated 'serve' is latreuo, which is also used in the Rahlfs edition of the Septuagint and in other critical editions of the Greek Old Testament. In the Greek version of Daniel produced in the late second century A.D. by Theodotion, the word translated 'serve' is douloo, a far more common Greek word that has a broader range of meanings.

"Whichever Greek translation one chooses to follow, the underlying Aramaic word (Daniel 2:4-7:28 was originally written in Aramaic, not Hebrew) is pelach, a word that is always used to refer to rendering religious service or performing religious rituals in honor of a deity. In other words, latreuo is an excellent Greek translation of pelach. That is why all extant ancient Greek versions of Daniel usually use latreuo elsewhere in Daniel to translate pelach (Dan. 3:12, 14, 18; 6:16, 20 [6:17, 21 in Greek]). In the early chapters of the book, Daniel and his Jewish friends had refused to 'serve' the image of Nebuchadnezzar or to 'serve' Darius, identifying themselves as those who 'serve' only their God, the living God (3:12, 14, 17, 18, 28; 6:16, 20). In this setting, the vision of people from all nations 'serving' the Son of Man presents a startling contrast. The 'service' that

Daniel and his friends refused to give to Nebuchadnezzar's image or to Darius, Daniel envisions all nations giving to the heavenly Son of Man.

“Daniel's reference to the Son of Man being ‘served’ implies a divine status for the Son of Man, not merely because of the use of that one word, but because of the context in which it is used. The universal sovereignty attributed to the Son of Man is earlier attributed to Daniel's God by the Babylonian and Persian kings... This language of a kingdom that will not be destroyed and that will endure forever is then applied to the kingdom of the Son of Man... Within this larger context, the reference to all peoples ‘serving’ the Son of Man is confirmed as an expression of religious devotion. The One whom you regard as Ruler of your entire universe for all time is by definition your God, and it would be the height of folly not to render devotion or service to him.” (Robert M. Bowman Jr. & J. Ed Komoszewski, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ* [Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI 2007], Part 1: The Devotion Revolution – Jesus Shares the Honors Due to God, Chapter 5. The Ultimate Reverence Package, pp. 67-69; underline emphasis ours)

Moreover, Jesus is identified as this very same Son of Man that Daniel saw,

“Again the high priest asked him, ‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?’ ‘I am,’ said Jesus. ‘And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.’” Mark 14:61b-62 – cf. 13:26-27; Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 7:55-56

17. on 03 Sep 2010 at 10:49 am¹⁷ Jaco

Lorna,

What is the meaning of *pelach* according to the lexicons?

Secondly, if religious devotion is what Jesus will receive, instead of obeisance, where in the NT is *latreuo* applied to Jesus?

Jaco

P.S. I will leave Danny to reply on John 1:1. I do not believe in pre-existence Christology (contrary to Danny and Patric Navas). But even they have a better chance at John 1:1 than the Trinitarians do. Time and again John 1:1 turns out to be doctrinal ambush to Trinitarians...

18. on 03 Sep 2010 at 11:38 am¹⁸ Danny Dixon

I do appreciate the comments that you've made on the use of the word *latreuo* and how it is translated in the biblical texts.

What I think you, and perhaps Marc, are failing to realize is that people who used the language in early Christian literature were *not* opposed to the use of the word when speaking of human beings. I cited a reference from the Sibylline Oracles in my rebuttal to Marc's latest constructive speech to demonstrate that the word was so used of Adam. I also cited a scholar who gave a very good reason to explain why such a usage would have been acceptable, namely because Adam existed in God's image. He was God's vice-regent, agent on the earth.

Jesus is God's agent on the earth and in that sense, then he could receive worship. When Jesus is dealing with the devil in Matthew 4, Luke 4, the issue at hand isn't whether *Jesus* should be worshipped. The devil was trying to get Jesus to worship *him*. When Jesus represents that God is to be worshipped (*latreuo*) there isn't any point at issue as to whether he, God's representative should be worshipped. I'm sure Jesus could have said, worship only the Father and me his regent. This wasn't necessary even though it was true. God's agent is God's *shiliach*, and whatever is true of the sender is true of the one he has sent with authority. I gave a quote from the Mishnah on that point. No one is making reference to that point . . . *at least not yet*.

It is not necessary to conclude that because Jesus is given *latreuo* that he is equal to Almighty God. I need to hear a response to the information that I have given. If one's agent is to be considered as himself in Hebraic thought, why cannot ones agent receive the glory and worship and honor that is associated with oneself *especially when there is scripture indicating that this was precisely what the Almighty had in mind*. The Father "has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father" (I'll have more to say about this language in my next rebuttal. The point is, however, that since God can receive honor and glory his Son should as well, as this was the Father's will. But the point is simple, if God wills that his agent should receive *latreuo*, then his agent can receive *latreuo*.)

The research represented in the question is to be commended for it represents a thorough interest in the matters at hand and a desire to do adequate research in to biblical and historical data behind the subject. *However*, one ought also to take into consideration the fact that one's agent is as the person sending that agent.

Jesus receives *latreuo* because he is Almighty God's agent. He is not himself Almighty God.

19. on 03 Sep 2010 at 1:05 pm¹⁹ Danny Dixon

Lorna:

I don't know why you would think I was drawing my comments from the Coptic version of the New Testament. I cited my sources earlier. I will give them again here:

In my first constructive speech I referenced the standard advanced Greek grammar used in colleges and seminaries currently written by Daniel Wallace. Regarding the Greek construction in John 1:1 he says that it “is likely to emphasize the nature of the Word, not his identity. That is to say, the Word is true deity but he is not the same person as the Theos [“God”] mentioned earlier in the verse” in *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* [Zondervan, 1996], pp. 45, 46).

In my second constructive, I referenced .H. Dodd, who directed the work of the New English Bible translators, from 1950. He writes, “‘The Word was a god.’ As a word-for-word translation it cannot be faulted” (“New Testament Translation Problems II,” *Bible Translator* 28.1[1977]:101-102). I made the comparative point that this translation/sense is not only grammatically possible, but grammatically the most natural reading (Other texts with the same grammatical construction are John 8:34: “Everyone who does sin is a slave of sin”; John 8:48: “You are a Samaritan”; John 9:24: “This man is a sinner”; John 1:1 “the word was a god”).

In comment 3 under Marc’s rebuttal 1b I referenced Joseph Henry Thayer, editor of an older lexicon of New Testament Greek. I noted that Thayer held, particularly regarding Jesus as the Logos in the first few verses of John, the Logos (the Word) “is expressly distinguished from the first cause” (J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977 reprint], p. 133). In other words, the Word is not God the first cause of everything. The comment is made on the basis of grammar, not theology, as I am prepared to demonstrate further.

Marc has given no response to any of the comments on Greek grammar in any of his following rebuttals or constructive statements. I am sure that he will do so at some point. He *needs* to for sure! I was anticipating some response from Marc on the above, and am prepared to cite other current standard works on the subject (a number of pertinent points regarding the Greek in the passage have been noted as to the logic of the verse as well as the strict grammar of it as well.)

Danny

20. on 03 Sep 2010 at 1:27 pm20 Danny Dixon

Re: Comment 15 above

Lorna:

You say that you are “pretty sure [that I] would not agree” that John 1:18 should be translated “only begotten God,” but you are incorrect. My conclusions are not primarily based upon your reasons provided, but the fact based on the most likely reading according to those scholars associated on the scholarship of New Testament Greek manuscript study in what is known as lower criticism or textual

criticism. Key conclusions are summarized in the 2nd edition of the *Textual Commentary of the Greek New Testament*, pp. 169-170, edited by Bruce Metzger, *et al.*

I cited that source in my Second Constructive (3a) presentation, pointing out how the translation “the word was a god” also harmonizes well with the most likely manuscript reading of John 1:18 that speaks of Jesus as “an only-begotten/unique god” who dwells “in the bosom of the Father.”

Danny

21. on 03 Sep 2010 at 4:29 pm²¹ Karl

Hello Lorna,

you wrote:

The Aramaic verb *pelach*, which is translated in the above texts as *serve*, refers to the cultic worship which is to be rendered to God alone.

This is not completely accurate. “*Pelach*” in Aramaic means to plow, work or serve. It can refer to religious service or to service offered to men. In this way it is similar to the Hebrew word “דָּבַע” which is often translated with “*Pelach*” in the Targums. Look at these two examples from Targum Onkelos:

פִּלְחוּ יֵת כְּדָרְלֹמֶר, תַּרְתָּא עֶסְרִי שָׁנִין

“They served (*pelach*) Kedarlomer for 12 years...” (Gen. 14:4)

דִּיאִין אֲנִי, וְאַף יֵת עֲמָא דִּיפִלְחוּן בְּהוֹן

“But the nation that they will serve (*pelach*), I will judge.” (Gen. 15:14)

22. on 03 Sep 2010 at 5:24 pm²² Danny Dixon

Karl:

You’re not suggesting that *pelach* in those two passages means they would worship Kedarlomer or the nations, are you?

Anyway, it’s not my means of approaching the argument.

Danny

23. on 03 Sep 2010 at 5:52 pm²³ robert

“If one’s agent is to be considered as himself in Hebraic thought, why cannot ones agent receive the glory and worship and honor that is associated with oneself especially when there is scripture indicating that this was precisely what the Almighty had in mind.”

Danny

When someone is appointed agent for someone than they can only representate them from that point forward. They can not be credited for things that were done before they were appointed. God only deserves the glory for being the only uncreated, the glory for all creation and the wisdom of his Word. Jesus can not receive glory for these acts because they are alone God’s!

24. on 03 Sep 2010 at 6:25 pm24 Lorna

Yes, Karl, you are right. Thanks for that correction. Pelach can refer to labor. However, when it refers to worship (context) it is only used of worshipping god. When Jesus was in the wilderness I don’t believe he was telling satan that god alone should we do servile work to. He was saying to god alone should we worship. Latreuo can mean servile work also since it is the verb form of the noun latris which means “hired laborer”, but the context in the wilderness does not suggest that he is warning people not to labor under other people, so the wilderness conversation is concerning worship. Javo asked where does Jesus receive latreuo. It is in that prophetic text in Daniel if you are to translate from the Aramaic to the Greek. Daniel 7:14 offers additional evidence that Messiah would receive true worship. Here, the Aramaic word ‘pelach’ is rendered latreuo in the oldest versions of the LXX, refering to the sacred service (= “worship”) offered to God alone. Yeshua/Jesus is “Son of Man” in this passage who prophetically receives worship. Now, you must 1st believe this son of man in Daniel 7:14 is a messianic prophecy. While modern Jewish commentators deny the Messianic import of this passage, this was not the case with the earliest Jewish exegetes. The Babylonian Talmud associates this passage with Messiah (Sanhedrin 96b-97a, 98a, etc.). A fragment in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q246) quotes this verse and calls the messianic figure “Son of God,” “Son of the Most High,” and “a great god of gods,” which indicates that the Qumran community looked for a divine messiah of some sort, and believed Dan 7:13ff referred to Him. The Midrash Numbers (13:14) says that Dan 7:14 refers to “King Messiah.” I’m unaware of any earlier testimonies of the rabbis.

The early church fathers who commented on Dan 7 all associated it with Jesus. Not one understood it as mankind collectively (cf., Justin Martyr, Dialog with Trypho, 31; Irenaeus, Against Heresies, 4:20:11; Tertullian, Against Marcion, 3:7, 4:10, etc.; Hippolytus, Christ and AntiChrist, 2:26; etc.).

It is only modern day Jewish scholars who says this is the collective humanity.

25. on 03 Sep 2010 at 6:37 pm25 Lorna

Yes, I clearly understand that Jesus was telling satan that he should not receive worship. The focus or point was that Jesus declared that ONLY god should receive worship AND NOT god and his agent.

Also, am I mistaken in saying that Daniel Wallace uses the coptic text at John 1:1? I could be wrong, but I believe that is the case. So, knowing that you agree with Wallace, I in turn said since you rely on the coptic text at John 1:1. Also, I believe I recall you referring to the coptic text in relationship to John 1:1 when you wrote elsewhere (outside of this site).

26. on 04 Sep 2010 at 2:17 am²⁶ Danny Dixon

Re: Comment 25

Lorna:

The *Textual Commentary* does not mention the Coptic Version as being the reason for the decision of the committee to choose the reading *monogenes theos*. And Daniel Wallace's book does not mention the Coptic Version as the source for his decision of translation.

Danny

27. on 04 Sep 2010 at 9:14 am²⁷ Jaco

Danny,

I appreciate your explanation on latreuo, based on other extra-biblical works. The points you make are indeed valid.

Lorna,

My question was to show *in the NT* where Jesus received latreuo.

As regards Ralph's LXX, here is an excerpt from Henry Wace:

Theodotion's work was not so much an independent translation as a revision of the LXX, with its insertions usually retained, but its omissions supplied from the Hebrew—probably with the help of Aquila's version. Theodotion's was the version Origen usually preferred to the other two for filling omissions of the LXX or lacunae in their text as he found it; and from it accordingly comes a large part of the ordinary Greek text of Jeremiah, and still more of that of Job.

Thus in these books we have fuller materials for learning the character of his version than that of either of the others; and still more in his version of Daniel, which has come down to us entire, having since before Jerome's time (how long

before we are not told) superseded that of the LXX so completely that the latter was lost for centuries, and is now extant only in a single Greek copy, the Cod. Chisianus, and in the Syro-Hexaplar translation contained in Cod. Ambrosianus (C. 313 Inf.). Any one who compares this version with Theodotion's which is usually printed in all ordinary editions of the Greek O.T. must agree with Jerome (Praef. in Dan.) that the church chose rightly in discarding the former and adopting the latter. Indeed, the greater part of this Chisian Daniel cannot be said to deserve the name of a translation at all.

It deviates from the original in every possible way; transposes, expands, abridges, adds or omits, at pleasure. The latter chapters it so entirely rewrites that the predictions are perverted, sometimes even reversed, in scope. We learn from Jerome (in. Dan. iv. 6, p. 646) that Origen himself ("in nono Stromatum volumine") abandoned this supposed LXX Daniel for Theodotion's. Indeed, all the citations of Daniel, some of them long and important passages in Origen's extant works, agree almost verbatim with the text of Theodotion now current, and differ, sometimes materially, from that of the reputed LXX as derived from the Chisian MS.

He seems, moreover, to have found the task of bringing its text to conform to the original by the aid of Theodotion's a hopeless one, as we may judge by his asterisks, obeli, and marginalia in the two MSS. referred to. Yet that this is the version which Origen placed as that of the LXX in the penultimate column of the Hexapla and Tetrapla is certain.

Wace, Henry (1911), A Dictionary of Christian Biography and Literature to the End of the Sixth Century A.D., with an Account of the Principal Sects and Heresies.

Latreusosin in the older LXXDan is in no way "better" than that of Theodotion. In fact, its additions, interpolations and carelessness in transmission (possibly by later copyists) prompted Theodotion to produce a master text. So, feeble evidence there.

In Christ,

Jaco

28. on 04 Sep 2010 at 3:43 pm28 Karl

Hello Lorna,

Yes, Karl, you are right. Thanks for that correction. Pelach can refer to labor. However, when it refers to worship (context) it is only used of worshipping god.

My point wasn't just that pelach can refer to labor. "Pelach" in aramaic means to plow, work or serve. It can refer to religious service or to service offered to men. I

would recommend that we stay away from the word “worship” because that only has one meaning to us. “Serve” is a better translation for pelach and (as I have shown) it is not exclusively given to God. If you wish to prove that the messiah is himself God Almighty you will have to present other evidence.

Javo asked where does Jesus receive latreuo. It is in that prophetic text in Daniel if you are to translate from the Aramaic to the Greek.

If I were to translate pelach into greek I would use “douleuw” not “latreuw”. This is precisely how Theodotion translated it. Consequently, for this reason and many others, Theodotion’s translation is a much more accurate translation. The (trinitarian) Christian church even accepted Theodotion’s translation over the LXX because it was more accurate. (Thank you Jaco for so thoroughly informing us about this)

Daniel 7:14 offers additional evidence that Messiah would receive true worship. Here, the Aramaic word ‘pelach’ is rendered latreuo in the oldest versions of the LXX, referring to the sacred service (= “worship”) offered to God alone.

Does he receive true worship in LXX Daniel 7:14? I would challenge you to translate that passage into english from the greek. Who or what is worshiping the messiah here? Sean and I already addressed this problem earlier. The LXX does not say “all nations, tribes and languages shall serve him” as Theodotion and the Masorite text do.

2nd Unitarian Constructive (3a)

August 31st, 2010 by Danny Dixon

This is the fifth post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



In examining the discussion thus far, I see that I have presented a few points that I do not think Marc has dealt with well, and I will restate them as well as present my final constructive points for the readers' consideration.

1. Jesus, Uniquely Begotten, Was "With God"

We are discussing whether the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is alone Almighty God. And I do not think that Marc has adequately addressed some of my strongest points. Not the least of them is Jesus' concession that the Father has given him life. While Marc has cited sources that have provided some opinions of some recognized classic scholars, on this point his commentators have not adequately provided contextual argumentation as to why John 5:26 and 6:57 fail to establish Jesus' dependence in the absolute sense on having received life from the Father. Fathers generate life, they beget sons. While Marc has not stated it outright, Trinitarians believe, strangely, in a concept called the eternal begetting of the Son of God by the Father. The problem with this is that begetting is a point in time event. There was a moment in the past when Jesus did not exist. Then he *did* exist and, for a time, he was "with God" John reveals to us under inspiration (John 1:1).

Mark, in his Rebuttal 1b, follows Barnes in saying John 5:26 teaches Jesus' role as mediator in raising the dead and judging the world. Neither Barnes nor Marc had a comment on John 6:57 where Jesus says flatly, "I live because of the Father." And whatever may be the specifics of his role as mediator regarding others, he stressed the personal point in the two passages that he owes his life to the Father. While God had other sons, only Jesus is *monogenes* (John 1:14, 18). That is he is literally "one of a kind," "only," and "unique" among them (J.H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* 416-417). God gave this Son unique existence among all others that he also gave life.

2. Jesus, Named The Word of God (Revelation 19:13), Was "A God"/Divine, who Became Human

C.H. Dodd, who directed the work of the *New English Bible* translators, from 1950, writes, "'The Word was a god.' As a word-for-word translation it cannot be faulted" ("New Testament Translation Problems II," *Bible Translator* 28.1[1977]:101-102). In fact, this translation/sense is not only grammatically possible, but grammatically the most natural reading (Other texts with the same grammatical construction are John 8:34: "Everyone who does sin is a slave of sin"; John 8:48: "You are a Samaritan"; John 9:24: "This man is a sinner"; John 1:1 "the word was a god")

If the word was “a god” (a divine being), then it is natural if not necessary to conclude that “the word” was a personal entity who was “with God” in the beginning. And, if “the word” (who was a divine being) “became flesh” in the man Jesus, the straightforward interpretation is that “the word” actually became flesh (a man). In other words “the word,” ceased being “a god/divine being” and truly “became flesh/human,” not that he became some kind of a divine-human hybrid, or a ‘god-man,’ or a divine being who merely “cloaked himself” in a human “outfit.”

The translation “the word was a god” also harmonizes well with the most likely manuscript reading of John 1:18 that speaks of Jesus as “an only-begotten/unique god” who dwells “in the bosom of the Father.” This is, in fact, the most likely reading *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd Edition, pp. 169-170).

3. John 1:1-18 Harmonizes with Philippians 2:5-11, 2 Corinthians 8:9, and John 17:5

Paul tells us that although Christ was existing in God’s form (or ‘in a god’s form’), he “did not think to snatch at equality with God,” but “emptied himself” and took on “a slave’s form” when he “appeared in the likeness of men.” The text also speaks of a point in time when Christ “found himself in fashion as a man,” a seemingly redundant/nonsensical comment to make about someone who has never been anything but a man. The plain reading of the text indicates that Christ was in one form (God’s form) and took on a different form (a slave’s form) when he “appeared in the likeness of men” and when he “found himself in fashion as a man.” The plain reading also indicates that Christ’s conscious decision not to “snatch at equality with God” (or ‘exploit his likeness to God for his own advantage’) took place before he “appeared in the likeness of men.”

Incidentally, this understanding based on the plain reading perfectly fits Paul’s comments about Jesus in 2 Corinthians 8:9: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.” This clearly tells us that Christ had something very valuable that he gave up for our sake. This is just like Paul’s statement to the Philippians: “although he was existing in God’s form (‘he was rich’), he emptied himself, and took on the form of a slave (‘he became poor for our sake’).” In addition, these two texts (Philippians 2:5-11 and 2 Corinthians 8:9) also appear to harmonize wonderfully with Jesus’ statement in John 17:5: “Father, glorify me alongside [*para*] yourself with the glory I had alongside [*para*] you before the world was”—language suggesting, again, that Jesus had something valuable at one time that he gave up (See *para* with the dative of person = *by the side of, beside, by with* in G. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, pp. 336-337).

When all these points are kept in mind, Paul’s statement in 2 Corinthians 8:9 seems like it means: “although Christ was rich (though he ‘had glory’ with God before the world was) he became poor (he emptied himself of his ‘god’ form and took on a slave’s form when he appeared in the likeness of men/and the word1 became flesh) for our sake, so that

through his poverty (through his human life, sacrificial service, and ultimate death) we might become rich.”

4. Psalm 110:1 The Distinction Between the Messiah (Adoni) and Yahweh

Marc still has not given a satisfactory response to this passage. The teaching of the Psalm is supported by Passages like 1 Timothy 2:5, which among other passages demonstrates the distinction between the exalted man Christ Jesus and the Father. This will become increasingly significant as I try to demonstrate more thoroughly in the latter part of this debate, what I mentioned in my first presentation, namely how a Trinitarian perspective cannot coherently be maintained. Only by recognizing that Jesus is a separate entity from the one who gave him life can we make sense of some very plain biblical texts that become muddled if there are more than one Almighty beings. That Jesus is a separate individual—and I do not mean that in a philosophical sense where, for instance, “person” does not mean individual entities with individual wills that they may choose to offer in harmonious cooperation with another (or not)—that Jesus is a separate individual from the Father who is Almighty God is easily demonstrated.

In preparing for this discussion, I have done a lot of reading. I’ve reviewed the first debate that I had with Mark June – October 2006, and I’ve tried to keep up with the most current discussions available on the topic. Two excellent resources that I would recommend, regardless of the position you embrace, are, on the Trinitarian side, Robert Bowman’s and J.E. Komoszewski’s *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ*, which reads a lot like Marc in some specific points of argumentation. On the strict monotheist side, see Patrick Navas’ *Divine Truth or Human Tradition: A Reconsideration of the Roman Catholic – Protestant Doctrine of the Trinity in Light of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures* (That’s really the whole title!). I’ve spent a lot of time talking with Patrick about issues in this discussion, and respect his balance and fair-mindedness immensely (There are differences on the Jesus is not Almighty God side too!), sometimes even embracing perspectives that he tried to provide with equanimity, some of his insights appearing in my share of the present debate.

6 Responses to “2nd Unitarian Constructive (3a)”

1. on 01 Sep 2010 at 1:56 am¹ Marc Taylor

Hello Danny,

I would like to ask you when you think Christ’s existence began?

Thank you

2. on 01 Sep 2010 at 10:04 am² Danny André Dixon

Marc:

Please clarify the question. If you are asking what I think you are asking, as “the Word,” (later fully revealed *name* being “The Word of God”), as God’s agent of creation, was given life as a divine being before the beginning of the physical universe. So as the Word he made all that came to be.

Danny

3. *on 01 Sep 2010 at 10:07 am*³ *Danny Dixon*

Marc:

I would like to ask you a question (I know we’ll have five formal ones apiece for the regular debate fields).

Do you believe in the Eternal Begottenness of the Son of God as do most Trinitarians?

Danny

4. *on 01 Sep 2010 at 10:36 am*⁴ *Danny Dixon*

Marc:

Let me clarify in answering your question.

1. I believe the “Christ” existed formerly as “The Word” “in the beginning” (John 1:1). It was before this beginning that God gave “the Word” life (John 5:26; 6:57) as a “unique” (Greek: *monogenes*) being who was “one of a kind” as compared with other sons of God (angels).

2. I take “in the beginning” to mean sometime before the “in the beginning” of Genesis 1:1 when God created the heavens and the earth (the universe).

3. The Word was existing as “a divine being” or as “a god” for some time “with God” before the beginning, and it is through the agency of the Word that all things that “came to be” (the universe) were made

Hope this helps. Please ask for clarification if I have been more confusing than I was earlier.

Respectfully,

Danny

5. *on 02 Sep 2010 at 4:42 am*5 Marc Taylor

Hello Danny,

Yes I believe in the eternal begottenness of the Son of God.

Thanks for clarifying your position.

Peace

Marc

6. *on 03 Sep 2010 at 12:30 am*6 Danny Dixon

Thank you, Marc for your answer to my question.

Cordially,

Danny Andre'

2nd Rebuttal (3b)

September 4th, 2010 by Marc Taylor

This is the sixth post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



1. Only begotten

a. NIDNTT: While *genos* is distantly related to *gennan*, *beget*, there is little linguistic justification for translating *monogenes* as “only begotten.” The latter practice originated with Jerome who translated it by the Lat. *unigenitus* to emphasize Jesus’ divine origin in answer to Arianism. The word *monogenes* reflects the Heb. *yahid*, only, precious [Gen. 22:2, 12, 16, of Isaac], and is used in Heb. 11:17 of Isaac who was unique in the sense of being the sole son of promise, but who was not the only son whom Abraham begat. Perhaps the word may best be translated as “unique” (2:75-76, *God - J. Stafford Wright*).

b. TDNT: John’s conception of *zwe* as present is even more radical. This is connected with the fact that he traces the resurrection of Jesus to the fact that as the *logos* of God and the eternal Son of God He is life and has life in Himself, not merely as the power of His life as a living creature, but as the creative power of God. As a living creature He has a *psuche* and He gives it up to death (10:11, 15, 17), but His *zwe* is not interrupted by death (2:870, *zaw - Bultmann*).

c. TDNT: Speaking of the Apostle John it reads:
Yet for him Jesus is so uniquely God’s Son from all eternity that he always without exception uses *tekna* for believers, and they alone, never Jesus, are said to be born of God (8:390-391, *hios - Schweizer*).

d. Vine: We can only rightly understand the term “the only begotten” when used of the Son, in the sense of unoriginated relationship. “The begetting is not an event of time, however remote, but a fact irrespective of time. The Christ did not become, but necessarily and eternally is the Son. He, a Person, possesses every attribute of pure Godhood. This necessitates eternity, absolute being; in this respect He is not ‘after’ the Father” (Moule) (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, only begotten, page 812).

e. How Danny could insist on the term “begotten” is puzzling and even more so when the Greek word doesn’t teach what he hopes it does. Danny tells us that, “Father’s generate life, they beget sons”. Danny’s analogy fails in that as with sons every father had a point in time when they were created.

2. Acts 2:36

a. As with the appellation “the Son of God” in Romans 1:4, Acts 2:36 does not teach Christ was made “Lord” in the sense of being created. He was “appointed” these appellations based on His resurrection.

b. Thayer: to (make i.e.) constitute or appoint one anything: *tina kurion*, Acts 2:36 (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, *poiew*, page 525).

c. Thayer: for although Christ was the Son of God before his resurrection, yet he was openly appointed [A.V. declared] such among men by this transcendent and crowning event) (*ibid.*, *horizw*, page 453).

3. John 1:1

a. I find it quite surprising that Danny would cite John 1:1 when this passage isn’t anywhere near conclusive in support of his position that the Lord Jesus is “a god”.

b. Mounce: But in Jn. 1:1, the *logos* is not only from God, but is God. According to John, this *logos* was in the beginning, was with God, and was God Himself (Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, *Word*, page 803).

c. NIDNTT: “In the beginning” - not “at the beginning” of Creation (Gen. 1:1), but in the “time before time” of divine eternity - was the Word (pre-existence of the Word, Jn. 1:1), the Word was with God (personal reference, Jn. 1:2), indeed, “the Word was God” (essential divinity of the Word, Jn. 1:1) (3:1115, *Word* - B. Klappert).

d. TDNT: Concerning the *Logos* it reads:

Here, then, that which is *en arche* is that which is “before” all time, or, more correctly, that concerning which no temporal statement can be made (1:482, *arche* - Delling).

e. Vine: it is usual to employ the article with a proper name, when mentioned a second time. There are, of course, exceptions to this, as when the absence of the article serves to lay stress upon. or give precision to, the character or nature of what is expressed in the noun. A notable instance of this is in John 1:1, “and the Word was God;” here a double stress is on *theos*, by the absence of the article and by the emphatic position. To translate it literally, ‘a god was the Word,’ is entirely misleading. Moreover, that “the Word” is the subject of the sentence, exemplifies the rule that the subject is to be determined by its having the article when the predicate is *anarthrous* (without the article) (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, *God*, page 490).

f. It should also be noted that the concept of agency as used by Danny to deny that Christ is God is specifically rejected. The NIDNTT reads, “The incarnation of the Word thus does not mean Jesus as the eschatological ambassador, in whom God is present and acting; it signifies the presence of God himself in the flesh” (3:1117, *Word* - B. Klappert).

4. John 17:5

a. The citation he gave to us by G. Abbot-Smith nowhere demonstrates that Christ is not the Almighty. What Danny refuses to accept is the fact that Christ eternally existed with the Father. He then chose to relinquish the right to always exercise His full power/authority when He came to the earth but as of His exaltation He has all power/authority once again.

On John 17:5:

b. Thayer: of God exalting, or rather restoring, Christ is his Son to a state of glory in heaven (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, doxazw, page 157).

c. Thayer: of that condition with God the Father in heaven to which Christ was raised after he had achieved his work on earth: (where he is said to have been in the same condition before his incarnation, and even before the beginning of the world) (ibid., doxa, page 156).

d. TDNT: Elsewhere, however, it is said of the Redeemer during His earthly life that He has laid aside His power and appeared in lowliness and humility, Mt. 11:29; 12:18-21; 2 C. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-8 -> kenow 3, 661, 13-28, cf. the temptation of Jesus, Mt. 4:8 f. par. Lk. 4:5 f. Thus, when the full power of Jesus is occasionally mentioned during the time of His humiliation, it is merely a proleptic fact.

A new situation is brought into being with the crucifixion and resurrection. The Chosen One seizes the full power which He had from the beginning of the world, Mt. 28:18: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (5:895, pas - Reicke).

e. TDNT: As glory is an attribute of God "before all eternity" (Jd. 25), so Jesus can say (Jn. 17:5, 24) that He possessed the divine glory even "before the foundation of the world" (6:687, pro - Reicke).

5. Psalm 110:1

Danny insists that I did not give a satisfactory response to this passage but when he simply asserts that Jesus is a lesser individual from Jehovah my response was satisfactory in that his brief comment was no more than an assertion without proof. In any event since the Messenger of YHWH is YHWH (cf. Genesis 48:16) adoni is applied to YHWH (cf. Judges 6:13). The Messenger of YHWH will be discussed further in my Second Constructive Statement.

48 Responses to "2nd Rebuttal (3b)"

1. on 04 Sep 2010 at 10:20 am1 Frank D

If John 1:1 is referring to a second person of the trinity shouldn't it read "before the beginning" not "in the beginning"?

How does the gospel of the kingdom of God even work if there is a trinity? If there was a son before the beginning, why did God create man? If God created man and knew he was going to sin, why go through all of history? That is not love. But, if God was seeking people to walk in fellowship with him and throughout history we see people choosing to stand up and be God's representative on Earth, even to the point that his own son (a man), would die as a sacrifice....That is a message. That is a plan. That is the word!

2. *on 04 Sep 2010 at 11:12 am2 JohnOneOne*

Regarding Jehovah's Witnesses' "New World Translation" Bible and its rendering of John 1:1, it may interest you to know that there is soon to be published an 18+ year reference work (as of 09/2010) in support and explanation of their wording of this verse (especially that of the third clause with "a god" as its rendering) entitled, "What About John 1:1?"

To learn more of its design and expected release date, we invite you to visit:

<http://www.goodcompanionbooks.com>

Agape, JohnOneOne.

3. *on 04 Sep 2010 at 11:55 am3 Jaco*

Hi there, JohnOneOne

I'm certainly looking forward to that release. Please keep us posted regarding this.

One way or the other, John 1:1c is no text for the Trinitarian.

Jehovah willing, I'll be critiquing an article by David Barron on his perceived errors of Socinianism. You will find it on this site, and if you want to, you can comment on it.

In Christ

Jaco

4. *on 04 Sep 2010 at 3:52 pm4 Marc Taylor*

Just as God was in the beginning so too with Christ.

5. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 10:01 am5 Frank D*

Marc, John 1:1 does not say "In the begining was Christ". You are reading pre-existence theology back into the verse.

You continue to denounce Danny position based on what is not written and ignoring what is written. Does Jesus have a God? Yes! Does Jesus call him the "One True God (John 17:3)?" YES! Should we worship and serve and live our lives for the same God Jesus does? YES!

Does trinity theology encourage the worship and serving and living for the same God that Jesus does?

Why must the trinity theology confuse God's word beyond what is clearly written?

I Corinthians 14:33 (a):
For God is not the author of confusion but of peace.

6. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 2:26 pm6 Danny Dixon*

Marc:

In light of Frank's question above, do you think that a person would actually perish eternally if he didn't acknowledge Jesus as Yahweh? And if so, on what basis?

If you'd rather not answer here, I'll forego and make it one of the five for the latter part of the debate.

Frank:

Do you think a Trinitarian will be damned (however you define it) if he insists on the doctrine that Jesus must be seen to be Almighty God?

Danny

7. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 3:48 pm7 Frank D*

Danny, That really is the crux of the question here. There is not a god who is a trinity and a God who is not. I believe John 17:3 and Romans 10:9-10 hold the truth to salvation. What God do you serve and who is Lord of yor life? Since God looks on the heart, he is the only one who can answer who the true followers of his son are. Sounds like cop out but I condemn no one.

I hold to the opinion that a person cannot go wrong if they love and serve the God Jesus prayed to.

8. on 05 Sep 2010 at 4:01 pm8 Danny Dixon

And Frank:

Is it idolatry to pray, give *latreuo* to Jesus? Idolatry is a condemnable offense, you know.

Danny

9. on 05 Sep 2010 at 4:27 pm9 Frank D

Well, Danny, I guess that depends on what prayer is?

Is it Stephen called out to Jesus in Acts 7:

59And they stoned Stephen,
as he was calling upon the Lord and
saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my
spirit." 60And he kneeled down, and
cried with a loud voice, "Lord, do
not hold this sin against them." And
when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Is it Paul thanking Jesus in 1 Timothy 1:

12I am always thanking him
who enabled me, that is, Christ Jesus
our Lord, because he counted me
faithful, appointing me to his
service,

There probably are other examples and I think depending on one's beliefs in the trinity, it would influence if it was considered prayer. I do not call it prayer. I do not 'pray' to Jesus. I cannot find a verse that states to pray to Jesus. If I am incorrect, please let me know.

However, Jesus is our mediator. Shouldn't we be talking to him? Is that prayer?

10. on 05 Sep 2010 at 6:11 pm10 Danny Dixon

Frank,

I mean *latreuo*.

Danny

11. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 6:57 pm*¹¹ *Marc Taylor*

Frank,
I cited several lexicons that don't see it your way.
Of course Jesus has a God because he is also a man. John 17:3 has already been addressed.
The Bible teaches that the Lord Jesus is worshiped/prayed to as well.

Danny,
A person will perish eternally if they do not believe the Lord Jesus is God for they have a false Christ and a false Christ can not save anyone.

Marc

12. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 8:18 pm*¹² *Frank D*

Marc, Do you have the same God that Jesus has?

John 20:17

13. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 8:25 pm*¹³ *Danny Dixon*

Marc:

Marc:

Just wanted us to be clear on that as I was really wondering why it was such a big issue for you.

I, on the other hand, do not see that one's having a mistaken understanding of the nature of God would, in and of itself, affect whether God would apply the benefits of Christ's blood to that individual.

By the way, in your your 3a, Comment 5, you wished me "Peace" at the end of the note. What did you mean by that?

Fraternally,

Danny

14. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 8:43 pm*¹⁴ *Marc Taylor*

Frank,
Yes I have the same God as Jesus does.

Danny,

The blood from a false Christ is powerless but the blood from the true Christ is salvific. In fact, John 17:3 reads that eternal life is knowing the only true God ,that is the Father. One can not know the Father in that they deny who the Son really is (1 John 2:23).

15. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 9:16 pm*15 *Danny Dixon*

Marc:

Are you thinking that when John 17:3 says, “This is eternal life . . .” that it is talking about salvation?

1 John 2:23 says that one is not to deny the Son. I do not. It also says that one is to confess the Son, which I do?

The consequences affect the relationship that one has with the Father.

Are you saying that the particular relationship of the Son as being God is discussed in the letters of John (or maybe even the gospel) as having the consequence of losing relationship with the Father? I ask because the passages you mention do not have that specificity.

Just wanting to be clear.

Fraternally,

Danny

16. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 10:20 pm*16 *Marc Taylor*

Danny,

But one must confess the biblical Son. And the “en arche” in 1 John 2:13 is: that which is “before” all time, or , more correctly, that concerning which no temporal statemnet can be made (TDNT 2:484, arche -Delling).

In John 17:3 “eternal life” is talking about salvation.

“In the Fourth Gospel, the sending of Jesus is a firm foundation for the doctrine of salvation. One believes and recognizes God and him whom he has sent (John 17:3; cf. Num. 16:28) (NIDNTT 3:645, Son - Michel).

17. *on 05 Sep 2010 at 11:33 pm*17 *Ray*

I believe a man will perish eternally if he will not believe Jesus is the Son of God.

If a Trinitarian believes Jesus is God, does he have a false Christ?

This is what concerns more than a few people, giving rise to question. Does he

have a false Christ in mind? Does he have a false paradigm? It seems to me that a lot of people wonder about this and are not sure. It all seems so confusing.

So why would a man hold his doctrine so high and be so quick to ignore what it does to others? Is it a right thing to do?

Should a Trinitarian say, "I choose to view God, Jesus, and the spirit of God this way, but do not insist all others need to in order to be saved."?

Is it wrong if a man say, "I hold to the doctrine that Jesus is the Son of God, but do not limit another's liberty to compare him with God in a metaphor."?

18. on 05 Sep 2010 at 11:43 pm¹⁸ Ray

Is the Trinity doctrine a strange fire that God has not ordained for the church? Is that why so much trouble seems to surround it?

Does God necessarily require all his children to bow to it in order to be born again and receive his spirit, if not, why not?

19. on 06 Sep 2010 at 6:51 am¹⁹ Jaco

Good day,

How Danny could insist on the term "begotten" is puzzling and even more so when the Greek word doesn't teach what he hopes it does. Danny tells us that, "Father's generate life, they beget sons". Danny's analogy fails in that as with sons every father had a point in time when they were created.

Regarding Luke 1:35 and the extra-biblical concept of "eternal Son," Adam Clarke has this to say:

We may plainly perceive here that the angel does not give the appellation of Son of God to the divine nature of Christ, but to the holy person or thing, to hagion, which was to be born of the Virgin, by the energy of the holy spirit... Here I trust that I may be permitted to say, with all due respect to those who differ from me that the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ is, in my opinion, anti-scriptural and highly dangerous. This doctrine I reject for the following reasons. 1. I have not been able to find any express declaration in the Scriptures concerning it. 2. If Christ is the Son of God as to his divine nature, then he cannot be eternal: for son implies father, and father implies the idea of generation, and generation implies a time in which it was effected and time also antecedent to such generation. 3. If Christ is the Son of God as to his divine nature, then the Father is of necessity prior, consequently superior to him. 4. Again, if this divine nature were begotten of the Father, then it must be in time, i.e., there was a period in which it did not exist and a period when it began to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed

Lord and robs him at once of his Godhead. 5. To say that he was begotten from all eternity is in my opinion absurd, and the phrase eternal son is a positive self-contradiction. Eternity is that which has no beginning, nor stands in any reference to time. Son supposes time, generation and Father: and time also antecedent to such generation. Therefore the conjunction of these two terms Son and eternity is absolutely impossible, as they imply essentially different and opposite ideas.

Clarke's Commentary (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1837)

Nathaniel Emmons of Yale (1745-1850) declared that "‘eternal generation’ is eternal nonsense."

Trinitarian J.O. Buswell, former Dean of the Graduate School, Covenant College, St. Louis, MO..

"The notion that the Son was begotten by the Father in eternity past, not as an event, but as an inexplicable relationship, has been accepted and carried along in the Christian theology since the fourth century... We have examined all the instances in which 'begotten' or 'born' or related words are applied to Christ, and we can say with confidence that the Bible has nothing whatsoever to say about 'begetting' as an eternal relationship, between the Father and the Son. A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion, Zondervan, 1962, p. 110.

Luke 1:35 has embarrassed many orthodox theologians, since in preexistence [Trinitarian] theology a conception by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb does not bring about the existence of God's Son. Luke is seemingly unaware of such a Christology; conception is causally related to divine Sonship for him. Raymond Brown, The Birth of the Messiah, p. 291

Mr. Taylor, it is one thing to say that Jesus Christ is the Unique Son of God. But it is a fallacious leap to ascribe his uniqueness to his "eternality," instead of what Scripture ascribes it to. No proof here.

Secondly, the concept conveyed by the Father/Son anthropomorphism is one of inequality in time, glory and ability. Scripture tells us that YHWH had no beginning, hence your statement, "every father had a point in time when they were created," being utterly reductionistic in that the Heavenly Father is never depicted as a son of anyone else. No proof here.

As with the appellation "the Son of God" in Romans 1:4, Acts 2:36 does not teach Christ was made "Lord" in the sense of being created. He was "appointed" these appellations based on His resurrection.

This by definition refutes one of the tenets of the Trinity. God is Lord (Adonai) by definition. If someone else made him such, He requires a Higher Power, or Bestower of Authority to do exactly that. No amount of linguistic/logical acrobatics can refute this.

Re John 1:1:

The Trinitarian scholars you cite only repeat what the ancient Councils post-biblically determined on the “essence” and “nature” of God. You’ll have to show from Scripture that “in the beginning” implies “eternity.” To cite scholars who erroneously equate ‘ho theos’ with the anarthrous predicate ‘theos’ is just that: erroneous. If this debate turns out to be a ping-pong game of scholars vs. scholars, what’s the use? Bring solid Scriptural evidence to the table, please.

Re John 17:5

What Danny refuses to accept is the fact that Christ eternally existed with the Father. He then chose to relinquish the right to always exercise His full power/authority when He came to the earth but as of His exaltation He has all power/authority once again.

Where’s your proof for his “eternal existence?” Even with the notion of “restoring to previous glory,” you have to prove that that glory is glory belonging to God Almighty. One of your sources says:

“Thus, when the full power of Jesus is occasionally mentioned during the time of His humiliation, it is merely a proleptic fact.”

You will have to prove that the declarations in passages like John 17:5 excludes the possibility of ideal prolepsis also in those cases!

Re Psalm 110:1

Danny insists that I did not give a satisfactory response to this passage but when he simply asserts that Jesus is a lesser individual from Jehovah my response was satisfactory in that his brief comment was no more than an assertion without proof. In any event since the Messenger of YHWH is YHWH (cf. Genesis 48:16) adoni is applied to YHWH (cf. Judges 6:13). The Messenger of YHWH will be discussed further in my Second Constructive Statement.

To Trinitarians, YHWH = Father + Son + Holy Ghost. Here in Ps 110:1, Adonai, YHWH, says to someone else to sit at His right hand. This indicates that Almighty God spoke to and appointed someone else, lacking authority (else, why the appointment?), distinct from God Almighty.

For your rather novel invention, namely, that the messenger is YHWH Himself, you’ll have to refute the notion of sh’liach as a necessary conclusion also in this case.

Ex. 23:20 has two characters in view, namely Jehovah and His angel: “Here I am sending an angel ahead of you to keep you on the road and to bring you into the place that I have prepared. Watch yourself because of him and obey his voice. Do

not behave rebelliously against him, for he will not pardon your transgressions; because my name is within him.”

Of course Jesus has a God because he is also a man. John 17:3 has already been addressed.

Yes, we have addressed John 17:3 and the explanation you gave proved to be lacking any serious value. You will have to prove that Jesus is something else beyond the second prototype of Man (1 Cor. 15:45, 1 Tim 2:5). Please provide evidence for your unique understanding of biblical anthropology. Whatever else Jesus is, him acknowledging the True God as someone else, and excluding anyone else by adding “only,” (you admitted yourself that anyone else claiming this position must be false gods) Jesus cannot be the One he points out to be the Only True God, Jehovah.

Just a question, Mr Taylor, do you believe that Jesus had to be God to redeem us of our sins, as Anselm proposed?

The Trinitarian concept prevents no one whatsoever to declare that Jesus is God of the Father!

Regards,

Jaco

20. on 06 Sep 2010 at 7:01 am20 Marc Taylor

1. No proof for the only-begotten”? I cited several lexicons as proof.
2. Scholars versus scholars is part of my point in John 1:1 and concerning “only-begotten”. As one asserting this assertion is nowhere near airtight at all.
3. John 17:5 - before the foundation of the world. World stand for the universe. Anything that was before the creation of the universe is eternal.
4. The Messenger of YHWH is YHWH - proof is coming in my next Constructive.
5. Yes Jesus had to be God to deliver us from our sins.
6. You never responded to debating me on whether or not Christ properly receives prayer/worship.

21. on 06 Sep 2010 at 7:48 am21 Ray

I suppose we could draw a triangle and write Peter, Paul, and Mary at each of its points, and inside the triangle write the word salt.

...Now Peter is not Paul, nor is Mary Peter, but each of them are salt and together they are the salt of the earth.

Does that basically explain the doctrine of the Trinity or not?

22. on 06 Sep 2010 at 8:14 am²² Marc Taylor

No for more than just three people are the salt of the earth.

23. on 06 Sep 2010 at 9:03 am²³ Danny André Dixon

Guys:

Do please leave ME something to debate Marc on in MY way! I am not a Socinian strictly. I am not an Arian strictly. I am not a biblical Unitarian (essentially Socinian). The way I use some scriptures that I will propose as favorable to my position may seem to support one or more of either of those named perspectives. But I assure you, particularly my non-Trinitarian brothers particularly, that *I will be put in no man's box*. I am content to debate Marc between now and October 2. Unfortunately, I did not have the foresight to ask Sean to allow a “clean” debate, that is, one where Marc and I are debating each other's points only.

It is distracting and counterproductive, in my opinion as to what Marc and I are doing here, for either of us to have to deal with the individual agendas of some who post here. For Marc I think it means he is pressured (though by no means is obligated!) to conduct two or more debates. He has made clear that he is willing to debate in an extended contest with others on a point that I have already conceded, albeit for different reasons: I have no problem rendering *latreuo* worship to one made in the *eikon/morphe* of God whom God has said can receive glory (John 5:23). Maybe I may agree to debate a Socinian, later, on the topic: The pre-human existence of Christ for *any* length of time is impossible. Affir: A competent Socinian. Deny: Danny André Dixon. But I have no interest in engaging in that short debate here.

Let Marc and I debate. Please limit your comments to an analysis of what *we* are doing, and stop using the Comments section as a soundibg board to feign support of me when you know you know you hold my position to be as unlikely (and maybe as damnable and idolatrous) as you think Marc's view is.

I think I would appeal to the Moderator to control posts that violate the purpose of *this strict discussion during* the remainder of the debate; the substance of alternative perspectives to my own have been competently expressed, and I really don't want the “help.”

Danny

P.S.: it is possible that Marc does not share my concern. If I have implied that he does I apologize and will endure what he would also permit as to the substance of future comments.

24. on 06 Sep 2010 at 9:10 am24 Jaco

Mr Taylor

1. No proof for the only-begotten"? I cited several lexicons as proof.

I cited scholars taking the opposing stance. What's the point of having a "battle of the scholars?" You'll say the scholars I cite are wrong. I'll say yours is wrong. The difference is, Mr Taylor, we Unitarians are the only ones actually producing arguments instead of quoting Trinitarian scholars.

2. Scholars versus scholars is part of my point in John 1:1 and concerning "only-begotten". As one asserting this assertion is nowhere near airtight at all.

Your scholars provide their opinion without elaborating on their apparatus for arriving at their conclusion(s). You, instead, require us to provide hard evidence. Sorry, that's double standards.

3. John 17:5 - before the foundation of the world. World stand for the universe. Anything that was before the creation of the universe is eternal.

Sorry, but you're evading my question. If Jesus could refer to the authority he "received" (past tense) in a proleptic sense, why did he not have his glory "before the world was" also in a proleptic sense? That fits with biblical anthropology, but not your post-biblical theology. Evidence, please.

Secondly, where is the evidence that everything before the creation of the universe is eternal?

Job 38:7 "When the morning stars joyfully cried out together, and all the sons of God began shouting in applause"

The angels were clearly spectators in God's creation of the Universe. According to you, Mr Taylor, they were eternal...

4. The Messenger of YHWH is YHWH - proof is coming in my next Constructive.

We will be awaiting your information. I hope you'll provide as evidence something more substantial than the parroting of demonstrably interpretive lexicons.

5. Yes Jesus had to be God to deliver us from our sins.

Scriptural evidence, please.

6. You never responded to debating me on whether or not Christ properly receives prayer/worship.

Thank you for the challenge. I will most definitely consider, not only my time in doing so, but also the quality of your debate here overall, the latter as primary indicator of whether debating you will be worth my time.

In Christ,

Jaco

25. on 06 Sep 2010 at 9:10 am²⁵ Danny André Dixon

Correction in my Comment 23 above

As regards John 5:23, substitute “honor” for the word “glory” in the sentence.

Danny

26. on 06 Sep 2010 at 9:15 am²⁶ Jaco

Danny,

I took note of your post above. I apologise from my part for any interference in your debate.

The stage is yours! 😊

Jaco

27. on 06 Sep 2010 at 10:16 am²⁷ Frank D

Danny, Marc, I too apologize for being a distraction to your ongoing debate. I will take notes and ask questions at a more appropriate time.

In Christ,

Frank

28. on 06 Sep 2010 at 10:20 am²⁸ Karl

Hello Marc,

You wrote:

No for more than just three people are the salt of the earth.

This brings up an interesting question that I have always wondered about the trinity:

“How do we know that there are just three people who are YHWH?”

Or we could say:

“On what basis do we say there are only 3 persons in the Godhead?”

Maybe there are four. For example: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and Angel of YHWH.

Maybe there are five: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Angel of YHWH, and Wisdom.

Maybe is a fourth... or tenth person in the Godhead who has not yet been revealed and will be revealed at some future date.

Is there any scriptural justification to limiting God to only 3 persons?

And if God is limited to 3 persons, can He still be infinite (i.e. not-limited)?

29. on 06 Sep 2010 at 10:46 am29 Sean

Danny and everyone else,

I am not going to limit (nor can I w/o completely banning someone) people's comments on the debate. My only rules for dialog are as follows (copied from our “Communication Policy” –see tab above):

1. Cursing, foul language, and blasphemy (blasphemy = trash-talking God)
2. Attacking people's intelligence, motives, or character rather than their arguments. (i.e. calling people stupid, etc.)
3. Completely unrelated comments (i.e. pontificating about summer in poetic form on a post about Jesus' resurrection)
4. Incoherent comments or riddles (i.e. including bizarre, contradictory, or just plain nonsensical statements)
5. Overwhelming the recent comments list unnecessarily (try to put all of your comments in one entry per post)
6. Hijacking a post repeatedly (i.e. we all do this from time to time but if you do it constantly it really does become onerous)
7. Disrespect towards others (i.e. sarcastic statements intended to belittle,

inappropriate labeling of people, overly critical demeanor towards a certain person, etc.)

Other than this, this is an open forum and people are free to say what is on their minds. You and Marc are under **no** obligation to respond to any comments whatsoever. Your only responsibility is to participate in the official debate. I hope this makes sense.

30. *on 06 Sep 2010 at 12:36 pm*³⁰ *Danny Dixon*

Re Sean at Comment 29

Sean

Fair enough.

Danny

31. *on 06 Sep 2010 at 2:19 pm*³¹ *Doubting Thomas*

Danny (msg. 23)

You said, “Stop using the Comments section as a sounding board to feign support of me when you know you know you hold my positions to be as unlikely (and maybe as damnable and idolatrous) as you think Mark’s view is.”

I don’t think it is accurate (or fair) for you to claim that anyone here is feigning support of you. We really agree with many of the points you are making. I have already told you we have several regular bloggers on this site that believe in the pre-existence of Yeshua/Jesus. Although the majority here disagree with them, and will tell them so, to my knowledge no one has ever said they would be damned for their beliefs or that they were idolatrous.

We just tell them what we believe and why we believe it. Not long ago we had a discussion about whether sincere Trinitarians, who try their best to follow the teachings of God, would jeopardize their salvation with their Trinitarian beliefs. Not one person on this site seemed to believe that a sincere Trinitarian would jeopardize their salvation solely because of their Trinitarian beliefs.

We are not like Marc and these other Trinitarians that say if you disagree with our opinion on the Trinity then you cannot attain salvation. Yeshua/Jesus talks about how angry God gets when people (especially religious leaders) teach human precepts/opinions as if they were the doctrines of God.

In Mathew 15:7-9 Yeshua/Jesus says, “You Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far

from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men'..”

A doctrine from God is something like in Mark 12:28-29 where one of the scribe asks Yeshua/Jesus “.....’Which commandment is the most important of all?’ Jesus answered, ‘The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’..”

All Trinitarians agree with us that this statement above is a doctrine/commandment that comes directly from God. That’s the reason they try to make the nonsensical claim that God is indeed really one, but at the same time he is also 3 distinct and separate individuals.

The fact is there is no scripture anywhere that says, ‘The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are really one person (God).’ This statement is nothing but a post biblical opinion and should not be taught as if it were a doctrine from God. At least in my humble opinion anywaze...

32. *on 06 Sep 2010 at 2:40 pm*³² *Jaco*

Thomas,

Couldn’t have said it any better...

Jaco

33. *on 06 Sep 2010 at 4:10 pm*³³ *Danny Dixon*

DT and Jaco:

I could accept such a statement if inferentially derived if it were a necessary inference. Even the passages that are presented seem to me to be capable of more than one inference, thus my puzzlement as to why someone would be condemned for not embracing someone’s inference when others are possible.

Danny

34. *on 06 Sep 2010 at 6:23 pm*³⁴ *robert*

Danny

comment 33 ,could you put that in laymans terms for us so at least i can be clear what you are saying.

Thomas

I agree with your last post

35. on 07 Sep 2010 at 12:43 am³⁵ Danny Dixon

Re Robert Comment 34

I wrote:

I could accept such a statement if inferentially derived if it were a necessary inference. Even the passages that are presented seem to me to be capable of more than one inference, thus my puzzlement as to why someone would be condemned for not embracing someone's inference when others are possible.

A necessary inference is a conclusion that, in the normal usage of language, must be deduced from available data (i.e. information). Example:

Coffee boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit and at a rather quick measurable rate cools to room temperature. If I walk into a room and observe a cup of coffee on the table and the measurable temperature is very close to 212 degrees Fahrenheit, it is *necessary to infer* that the coffee has recently been poured (assuming no other agent has been introduced to either slow the cooling process or to reheat an already cooled cup of coffee.

Example of a biblical conclusion that, in the normal usage of language *is necessarily inferred*:

When one reads John 1:1, *in the normal usage of language*, the first occurrence of the word "God" must be identified as someone or something other than The Logos that the Logos was with, and the second occurrence of the word "God" in John 1:1 must be something other than what it meant in the first occurrence.

Re Comment 31

DT:

You are right. I do not have information that would allow me to draw the conclusion that I did, and I apologize

Danny

36. on 07 Sep 2010 at 12:57 am³⁶ Ray

Karl, (Re #38)

It takes discipline to be a Trinitarian.

37. on 07 Sep 2010 at 7:22 am³⁷ robert

Danny

I didnt need a definition of to infer, i need you to clarify what you said using normal everyday words to make sure i understood what you was saying.
 I have never understood why people think they need to use uncommon language when there is everyday language that would work better .
 I could use big words but choose to try to keep it simple.
 So please explain your statement in laymen terms without the grammar lesson and failed science. Last tme i boiled coffe it boiled at 211.4 F where i live.

38. *on 07 Sep 2010 at 4:10 pm*38 Ray

When I read John 1:1, it seems to me that the Word that was with God is the Word that the Word was with, just as much as the Word was with God.

The same God that the Word was with in the beginning seems to me to be the same God that is God over all, even over the Word itself.

It seems to me that both uses of the word "God" in John 1:1 are speaking of the same person.

Though I use the word "Word" to refer to Jesus at times, or use the same word (Word) to speak of God, I can be speaking of the same Word in both instances.

I think I have the liberty in Christ to do so.

39. *on 07 Sep 2010 at 5:54 pm*39 Doubting Thomas

Danny

On behalf of all of us that support you in the debate, I thank you for the apology. I understand on most sites the debates and discussions get rather belligerent and insulting. This site is different in that the moderators keep a tight control on personal attacks. There might be a few people here that have a problem with your Arian-like beliefs, but I think the majority are willing to accept all Unitarians regardless of their beliefs.

I can see how some scriptures might lead someone to come to your beliefs. I guess it all comes down to personal opinion (interpretation) in the end.

Shalom...

40. *on 07 Sep 2010 at 6:29 pm*40 Ray

Here's a question I'd like to ask. It might be worth considering.

Is the Trinity doctrine an example of men going beyond what is written in the scriptures?

Here's another:

Is it a violation of I Cor 4:6?

Here is I Cor 4:6 from the 1599 Geneva:

Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied unto mine own self and Apollos, for your sakes, that ye might learn by us, that no man presume above that which is written, that one swell not against another for any man's cause.

The verse before is talking about judging nothing before the time for the Lord will shed light upon everything that is hid in darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts of men. Then all men will have praise of God.

Though we are warned that we judge not, we are admonished to judge ourselves to presume not above that which is written...etc.

41. *on 07 Sep 2010 at 7:52 pm*41 robert

“When one reads John 1:1, in the normal usage of language, the first occurrence of the word “God” must be identified as someone or something other than The Logos that the Logos was with, and the second occurrence of the word “God” in John 1:1 must be something other than what it meant in the first occurrence.”

Danny

this line of reasoning doesn't make the least bit of sense, the word was God because the word was God's.

As a biblical unitarian I have not the least bit of problem with John 1 when taken in full context that when the Holy spirit indwells a person God's word becomes flesh like it did in the flesh of Jesus at his baptism making Jesus the Son of God just like we all become the Son of God IF we are indwelt.

42. *on 07 Sep 2010 at 11:22 pm*42 Danny Dixon

Robert, Re: 41

So long as *Theos* is qualitatively understood (“and the word was a god” or “and the word was divine”) fine. But in the Bible, *Theos* means the Father. If the word *Theos* inherently meant “that which is begotten of God the Father” I could agree with you. But that's not what it means anywhere in the Bible or in all of the occurrences of Greek literature that I'm aware of (No I haven't read it all), unless it means it right here in John 1:1.

Danny

43. on 07 Sep 2010 at 11:38 pm43 robert

Danny

I am sorry but you must be mixed up because Theos most definitely isnt translated Father anywhere inside the bible or out.

44. on 08 Sep 2010 at 10:55 pm44 Danny Dixon

Robert:

Maybe a bit of clarity is in order. I'm sorry, but I see that I *didn't* say . In reference to John 1:1, when I've got, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was "with em>Theos/em>," I said that it em>meant/em> the Father, not that it was "translated" so. We are looking for *coherrent meaning* in context.

I think about how the Word was "with God." While there are probably a very few suggestions about what a phrase like that means, and while my short list might be suggestive, I think that in the context, the Father would be the most likely candidate with whom "The Word" would have been.

Don't you agree. If not, what is your understanding and justification for *your* understanding of the meaning of the sentence "The Word was with God."

Danny

45. on 08 Sep 2010 at 11:44 pm45 robert

Danny

You made a full implication that THEOS meant Father and went on to claim it was that way in all greek literature that you have read. Now you try to explain that is not what you meant.

I am sorry but your are losing creditabilty with me very rapidly.

"Don't you agree. If not, what is your understanding and justification for your understanding of the meaning of the sentence "The Word was with God." "

Danny my understanding of the word is that it originates from God therefore God .

thru out the OT we see the Holy Spirit or Angel that brought the message(word) to the prophets and John 1 is just descibing that the Word of God was going to come to Jesus via the indwelling of the Holy spirit in the flesh.

This indwelling of the Holy spirit makes Us the sons of God if we receive IT and the product of this indwelling is the Word of God

46. on 09 Sep 2010 at 11:07 am46 Danny Dixon

RE 45 above

Robert, you write as follows:

Danny

You made a full implication that THEOS meant Father and went on to claim it was that way in all Greek literature that you have read. Now you try to explain that is not what you meant.

I am sorry but your are losing creditabilty with me very rapidly.

It is *very* important in discussions like this to be precise in terminology. Your previous observation was that I had “translated” *Theos* as “the Father.” All I wanted to do was to clarify that in the context one needs to understand that, in the first instance of *Theos*, the Almighty or the Father is *meant*. This was my intention in asking about “your understanding and justification for your understanding of the meaning of the sentence “The Word was with God.””

Robert, you continue as follows:

Danny my understanding of the word is that it originates from God therefore God

I think your statement is a bit does not center on what I mean for when I ask, “what is your understanding and justification for your understanding of the meaning of the sentence ‘The Word was with God?’” I was not asking, in the first part of that question, what is the origin of the Word. The question had to do with the meaning of the sentence that the Word was “with God.” It is the answer to that question that takes on significance relative to things I am discussion.

I have said repeatedly in my presentations that I believe that the Word “originates from God” although I would say that the Word, therefore is to be understood as “a god” or “divine” qualitatively. To make the word *Theos* “God” without clearly indicating that “God” is not to be taken in its ordinary lexical sense, could lead people to make unfounded conclusions.

Theos with the Trinitarians means, either “the Father” specifically, or “the Trinity” in general. So I do not disagree with where you end up, that is, that *Theos* has qualitative connotations with the term having to do with *essence or ontology* (being or nature). In that sense, then, I don’t differ with your phraseology “originates from God.” But it is very important in John 1:1 that the understanding of origin be associated with the *second* occurrence of the word *Theos*.

In the first instance, to say that “the Word was with God” is not to say that “the Word” was present with divinities in general, but that the Word was with *Theos* meaning Almighty God as an individual. When it says in the second part of the sentence “and the Word was God” it should be understood that the Word has its orgins with God and is, qualitatively speaking, therefore of the same nature as

God—the Word is “a god” or the Word is “divine.” I am sorry that I am losing credibility with you, but that doesn’t mean that I need to waffle on what I am saying.

Robert, you write that throughout

the OT we see the Holy Spirit or Angel that brought the message (word) to the prophets and John 1 is just describing that the Word of God was going to come to Jesus via the indwelling of the Holy spirit in the flesh.

This indwelling of the Holy spirit makes Us the sons of God if we receive IT and the product of this indwelling is the Word of God

Are you saying that the Old Testament Angel (not sure what you mean exactly) *is* the Holy Spirit, and are you saying that this is prophetic of the Holy Spirit being the cause of Jesus’ birth? I do agree that it is precisely because of the Holy Spirit that Jesus comes to have birth as a human individual (Luke 1:35), but I am not quite sure that this is what you are saying.

Also I do believe that God’s holy spirit is what a person receives when that believer accepts that Jesus is the Messiah and responds in obedience to the message (Acts 2:36-38). Shorthand for that process would be to say that “those who received him, who believed in his name, may be called ‘sons [and daughters] of God’” (John 1:12).

I am simply trying to be precise, Robert.

Danny

47. on 09 Sep 2010 at 3:44 pm47 robert

“It is very important in discussions like this to be precise in terminology. Your previous observation was that I had “translated” Theos as “the Father.” ”

Danny

When you says Theos in John 1 meant the Father ,it is nothing other than the claim it should be translated that way.

Theos translates as god because that is what it means, there is no other meaning. when it is Yahweh it is speaking of we capitalize it to separate its use. If the Father was what it meant then it would have the word for Father

“Are you saying that the Old Testament Angel (not sure what you mean exactly) is the Holy Spirit,”

Danny

No, I am saying the word was delivered by angels or the Holy spirit even though if

it was the Holy spirit as the messenger than the Holy spirit could be called an Angel but not viceversa.

“and are you saying that this is prophetic of the Holy Spirit being the cause of Jesus’ birth? I do agree that it is precisely because of the Holy Spirit that Jesus comes to have birth as a human individual (Luke 1:35), but I am not quite sure that this is what you are saying”

Danny

I dont know how the Holy spirit caused Joseph’s seed to be formed in Mary but John1 is not a birth narrative, it is about Jesus receiving the Holy spirit at his baptism

48. *on 09 Sep 2010 at 6:16 pm*48 *Danny André Dixon*

Re 47

Robert:

Thanks for clearing up your perspective.

Danny

2nd Trinitarian Constructive (4a)

September 7th, 2010 by Marc Taylor

This is the seventh post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



1. The title “First and Last” is of course not simply “one theological statement with one theological truth”. Besides denoting that Christ is Eternal it also refers to His power and majesty.

a. Mounce: The word appears in Revelation in the phrase “beginning and end.” This theologically rich phrase articulates the power of God (Rev. 21:6) and Christ (22:13), denoting both extremes of beginning and end along with everything temporally and spatially in between (Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, End, page 212).

b. TDNT: The self-designation of God in Rev. 21:6 (cf. 1:8) or Christ in Rev. 22:13 primarily denotes His eternity but then His absolute majesty (8:55, telos - Gerhard Delling).

c. Christ did not die spiritually only physically so His physical death in no way impugns on the fact that He is eternal. Indeed, since He is referred to as the “First and the Last” (Eternal) in the very same place it talks about His death (Revelation 1:17; cf. 2:8) it even more strongly reaffirms this truth.

- Citing Luke 23:46 the NIDNTT reads, “At death man ceases to exist both in the realm of the physical and in the realm of the spiritual, and continues existing only in the spiritual; and the physical body, ceasing to be the embodiment of the whole man in the observable world, becomes merely a corpse (Jas. 2:26)” (3:694, Spirit - J.D.G. Dunn).

- TDNT: John’s conception of *zwe* as present is even more radical. This is connected with the fact that he traces the resurrection of Jesus to the fact that as the *logos* of God and the eternal Son of God He is life and has life in Himself, not merely as the power of His life as a living creature, but as the creative power of God. As a living creature He has a *psuche* and He gives it up to death (10:11, 15, 17), but His *zwe* is not interrupted by death (2:870, *zaw* - Bultmann).

d. Danny wrote: “As to the theological dictionaries and lexicons defining the terms *protos* and *eschatos*, the Bible doesn’t present “first and last” as meaning “the eternal one” (the one without a beginning).”

On the contrary, Danny’s ‘citationless’ theological opinion/bias will not allow the “first and last” to mean what the lexicons define it as.

2. The Messenger of YHWH/Agency

- a. Proxy: the agency, function, or power of a person authorized to act as the deputy or substitute for another (Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, page 1158).
 - b. What took place in Genesis 48 does not apply to agency/proxy/substitution for Jacob had already entered into the presence of the omniscient and omnipotent "God" (mentioned twice) so there was no need for him to resort to making a request to a limited created being.
 - c. It should be noted that the next sentence from the NIDNTT which Danny cited reads: Hence the messenger becomes the proxy of the one who has given him the commission (cf. 1 Sam. 25:40f; 2 Sam. 10:4, 6) (1:128, Apostle - D. Muller). Unlike with God and the Messenger of YHWH, David was not with the agents/representatives that he had sent. So for Danny to appeal to agency like some sort of mantra when it doesn't even apply is not at all convincing. Furthermore, in the NIDNTT Schonweiss writes that "the OT suppliant never forgot that he was addressing the holy, almighty God" (2:862, Prayer). Indeed, for "prayer in the OT is characterized by being directed to the one God" (ibid., page 863). Jacob directed his prayer to the Messenger proving that this Messenger is the "almighty God" (See 5h).
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3. Lord of lords

- a. Danny has an extremely difficult time accepting how "supreme" is defined. Supreme means paramount/utmost. There is none higher. Danny agrees that it refers to the Lord Jesus in Revelation 17 and 19 but he will not put Christ on equality with the Father despite the fact that the Father is referred to as kurios in heaven (cf. Acts 4:29). Lord is singular while lords is plural. One and only one Lord of all other lords - not Lords of lords but Lord of lords.
 - b. The appeal by Danny to the fact that Nebuchadnezzar is referred to as king of kings does not help his case at all for Nebuchadnezzar was not king of all other kings in that he ruled all other kings of the entire earth. Christ however equally rules with God in all of heaven. Nebuchadnezzar was not "supreme" in that regards.
 - c. Mounce: John envisions him as the ruler over all the kings of the earth- "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 17:14; 19:15-16). The Roman emperor was called "king of kings" because he presided over the vassal kings of the empire, but how puny and conceited in light of the absolute sovereignty of the Lamb, the true Lord of lords (Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Lord, page 423).
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4. Only/Alone

a. Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary defines unique as "existing as the only one or as the sole example; single; solitary in type or characteristics" (page 1554) while qualification is defined as a "restriction" (page 1174). Jude 1:4 teaches that "the uniqueness of God can be applied without qualification to Jesus" (NIDNTT 2:725, One - K.H. Bartels). Thus there is no restriction in that Christ shares in the "uniqueness" (singleness) of the "only one" God.

b. Job 9:8 That the universe came into being through the Lord Jesus necessitates that He is God for Job 9:8 teaches that God created the heavens "alone".

5. Prayer

a. Just because someone/something receives latreuw does not necessitate it ought to be done. Indeed, there are examples in the New Testament where latreuw has been misapplied (cf. Acts 7:42; Romans 1:25). I have cited several sources that demonstrate latreuw is due unto God alone while Danny informs us that Adam was worshiped (not that it was proper to do so) and "may have" (inconclusive) allowed for the worship of Christ. My citations are clear and decisive while Danny's are vague.

b. I cited several lexicons that demonstrate that proseuxomai is due only to God. Danny cited the NIDNTT 2:867 (prayer) affirming that it can appropriately be rendered unto Christ but I previously cited Mounce that this "is part of the proof of Jesus' deity" (Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words, pray, page 531). Indeed, another part of the proof of Jesus' deity is the fact that in Acts 1:24 where He is receiving proseuxomai He is referred to as the heartknower of all (kardiognwstes). This knowledge is something which the Jews knew referred to God alone (1 Kings 8:39) for it means He is omniscient and an omniscient Being is by definition "God":

c. Brown: God alone can reveal the things hidden in the heart of man (1 Cor. 4:5), examine them (Rom. 8:27) and test them (1 Thess. 2:4) (2:183, Heart - T. Sorg). And under 'kardiognwstes' (same page) it reads, "This belief in the omniscience of God is expressed succinctly by the adj. kardiognwstes."

d. TDNT: the omniscient God knows the innermost being of every man where the decision is made either for Him or against Him (3:613, kardiognwstes - Baugartel, Behm).

e. On the same page in which Danny cited (NIDNTT 2:867) it reads, "In the NT prayer is in all respects as it had developed in the OT." On page 863 it reads that an Israelite "knows too that God hears his prayer, and answers it if it is in agreement with his will." It takes an omniscient Being to hear all these prayers and an omnipotent Being to be able to act on what was requested of Him. Thus the Lord Jesus is both omniscient and

omnipotent. Christ's omnipotence is further supported both in the TDNT and the NIDNTT.

f. TDNT: His omnipotence, in which Christ shares as kurios (1 C. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Mt. 28:18), extends over the whole world, over heaven and earth (1:679, ge - Sasse).

g. NIDNTT: In Revelation sophia is praised in two hymnic texts as an attribute of God (Rev. 7:12; cf. also Rom. 16:27); it is also to be attributed to the slain Lamb at his exaltation (Rev. 5:12). The exalted Christ has the same power and wisdom as God (NIDNTT 3:1032, Wisdom - J. Goetzmann).

h. The very first word in defining 'omnipotent' in Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language (page 1005) is "almighty". The subject of this debate is 'The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is alone God Almighty' has just been refuted in that since Christ is omnipotent it means the same thing as saying Christ is God Almighty.

93 Responses to "2nd Trinitarian Constructive (4a)"

1. *on 09 Sep 2010 at 2:38 am* RogCat

It seems to me that arguing that Jesus was God comes from someone who is not all that familiar with the "Word of God" as it is revealed ONLY to those who accept Jesus as God's FIRST Created Son. This presents a paradox, doesn't it. It is MY belief that the power of understanding FROM the Holy Spirit ONLY comes to those who accept Jesus as God's FIRSTBORN Son out of all of the Creation. Denying God His Son — is VERY dangerous.

It is clear to some that Jesus was NOT God - while others prefer to adopt Satan's position that Jesus was actually God in disguise. Why is this? I believe that those who deny God's first Son CANNOT receive the power of understanding that COULD come to them AS the Holy Spirit

I conclude that the idea of the Trinity is Satan's position, because it makes the most sense of all as to why this false belief is being propagated. Most likely, Satan claims that his defeat at the hands of Jesus was NOT FAIR because God was deceptive, claiming to be a Son of Man, when HE was actually God. Nobody can beat God! And so Satan has continued to promote the idea of the Trinity.

It is very clear from the Scriptures that Jesus is speaking OF and TO his Father as another person.

Grow With God,
RogCat

2. *on 09 Sep 2010 at 6:19 pm* Marc Taylor

Yes, the Father is another person.

3. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 1:02 am*3 Danny Dixon

Re 1 and 2

Marc:

I am a person. You are a person. RogCat, whom you just answered, is a person. By “person,” in normal language, we all understand person to mean three separate human individuals. I know I, an individual person, am in Texas. You, an individual person, are in the Philippines. RogCat, a third individual person is somewhere else. We are three separate individuals who are human beings.

When you told RogCat, “Yes, the Father is another person,” did you mean that he is an individual divine being, separate from Jesus his Son who is a different individual divine being—as separate from one another as individuals as you are from me, and in the same sense as you are separate from me, or in the sense that you or I are separate from RogCat?

Or do you mean “person” in some other sense? If you mean it in some other sense, would you define it for us so that we may all have a similar understanding of your intention in using the word?

Fraternally,
Danny Dixon

4. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 2:41 am*4 David

I still don't understand how the Trinity can even be considered biblical since such conclusions can only be made by interpreting scripture to “imply” it. Contrasted to all the places over the entire bible where scripture *explicitly* states that God is one person, or the thousands of singular pronouns used. What about places where scripture is stated that “God is not a man or son of man...”? (Numbers 23:19) or that “God cannot change” (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Psalm 102:26-27; Malachi 3:6; Romans 11:29; Hebrews 6:17-18; James 1:17)

I agree with RogCat. We were created in God's image. Not the other way around. The Trinity issue focuses so much on the physical image of Jesus being projected on to God in such a way that it's causing the world to focus on these outward appearances instead of the true spirit of God which is pure truth and love.

We were commanded to love one another, and were told by our King Messiah that we can judge a tree by whether or not that tree bears God's fruit. This is why God has no image, and this is the purpose of the Judaic ban on all forms of ideas, images attributed to an almighty God who has absolutely no form... so that we

may recognize Him when we see him in others. That was Jesus' wish, that we be one as he and the Father are one. (John 17:24)

When we create God in the image of man (6) and proclaim that there are now three of these images, we get a very bad number.

The additional danger is removing God from the throne, changing the nature of Messiah, and putting this replacement messiah, on God's throne. (2 Thessalonians 3-4)

The bible is clear on who God is and Who God isn't and speaks very plainly. It's best to stay within the clear and "explicit" definitions of who God and His messiah are, instead of veering very far off course and believing what "seems" to be "implied" but is never directly stated. The Trinitarian position directly contradicts what is stated about God's person as described explicitly in a myriad of biblical passages.

How can we ever get to a point where "His Banner over us is Love" if we can't get back to the **Biblical** God of Israel? The bible is clear that He is ONE PERSON, not a man or son of man, He has no form and allows no image of Him or any created thing or being to be used in connection with his Worship. Why? Because we will miss the point and start arguing about moot concepts of religion/nationality/ethnicity instead of seeing what God himself TRUELY is. LOVE. *Little children can see this*, why can't we?

The Jews understand that God created us as vessels to house His spirit. It's exactly why Jesus says that the command to love our neighbors as our self is "like" the first command to love God. It is why the majority of the Law of Love is aimed at our dealings with people. If we don't stop to realize that God indwells in us and takes on many faces, then we will never find God. The Trinitarian view makes this impossible, because of the fact that so much focus is put on the fleshly/outer appearance of the person of Christ, and not on the "inner man", God who indwells in him. Who God really is.

For a people who were created in his image, we are made to also be one. But this Trinitarian thing is so divisive and is stopping us from being one. Because of this there is no common dialogue with Jew or Muslim, let alone any of the rest of the world's religions... That is a huge clue. You would think that the fact that the Jews think that the Trinitarian position on who messiah is in relation to God stinks is evidence enough. These are people who had the Torah and the knowledge of Messiah 3000 years longer than Christianity. The Trinity is a serious error that only came to be in the 5th century and NOTHING good came from it. The inquisition, the crusades, the 3rd reich... all "fruits" from that tree.

I'm not eating from that tree and I'm not going to that party!

5. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 3:17 am*5 Marc Taylor

Danny,
There are three Persons of the one God.

David,
Thousands of singular pronouns do not “cancel out” the plural pronouns that are used to describe God. All of Scripture must be considered. There are passages that refer to God employing the singular pronoun while there are some that use the plural. It is not an either/or dilemma but a both/and solution.

6. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 7:02 am*6 Doubling Thomas

David
I like what you said above. I agree with everything you said except where you said, “The Trinity is a serious error that only came to be in the 5th. century and NOTHING good came from it.”

I agree that the Trinity is a serious error and that nothing good ever came from it. But, from what I understand the first time the word Trinity is found written in any ancient document is around the middle, or the end, of the 2nd. century and by the end of the 4th. century the Emperor had passed a law saying, that the death penalty would be imposed on anyone who spoke against the Trinity. (So much for free speech and dialogue).

This death penalty was the first fruit of the Trinity, and like you said, it would appear that throughout history, death and destruction has been following it ever since...

7. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 9:32 am*7 Marc Taylor

Those who reject the Trinity and then spread their pernicious teaching that it is not true are guilty of spreading spiritual death to which they will be held accountable.

8. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 10:49 am*8 Frank D

Marc, You keep throwing that out there and yet never quote a bible verse that says “spreading spiritual death” if we deny the trinity. You are not God’s judge and jury. I find it very interesting that the orthodox church has often used scare tactics to keep people in line with the orthodox theology. How is that’s God’s loving approach? Did Jesus ever say that the trinity leads to life? Absolutely not!

What I think would be very interesting in a debate: How many clear bible verses does each side need to describe the One True God? The fewest number wins!

9. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 11:05 am*⁹ *Marc Taylor*

By denying who the Son is those who reject the Trinity deny the Father. An unbiblical Christ is not a Christ that can save.

I am judging based on what God has already declared so therefore it is loving to tell the truth. Not to tell the truth when people are perishing would be the unloving thing to do.

10. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 5:44 pm*¹⁰ *Frank D*

Marc, Thank you for being considerate. I can therefore judge that you do have a good heart and truly are concerned with the condition of people in the world.

I can butcher a response to your position or I can refer you to another thread authored by Angela. It is not my intention to distract you from your current debate but to only give you a well written article to consider.

<http://kingdomready.org/blog/2010/06/18/do-you-have-to-believe-in-the-trinity-to-be-a-christian/>

In Christ,

Frank

11. *on 10 Sep 2010 at 6:42 pm*¹¹ *Marc Taylor*

Hello Frank,

Thank you for the article. I will address a few points:

1. Many times there is more than one way to express a truth claim. I agree that nowhere does it read in the Bible, "To be a Christian is to be a Trinitarian. To deny the Trinity is to deny Christianity" but it's truth is clearly taught. A false god can not save - only the true Triune God can save. Eternal life is knowing the only true God (John 17:3) and to know Him is to know who the Son is. When one denies who the Son really is then one also denies the Father (1 John 2:23).
2. Romans 10:9, 10 is a concise teaching of salvation but it is certainly not exhaustive. Mormons have no problem confessing the Lordship of Jesus and believing that God hath raised Him from the dead but Mormons certainly do not have the biblical Jesus.
3. Psalm 119:160 reads that the sum of God's word is truth. When formulating a doctrine all the words of the Bible must be considered. Furthermore, certain passages must not be embraced (i.e. Christ's humanity) and pitted against others (i.e., Christ's Deity).

12. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 1:18 am*¹² *RogCat*

I agree with the statement, "When one denies who the Son really is then one also denies the Father."

It is therefore extremely important that we give God his due. God started out to create His children. His PLAN, was called His WORD. Jesus was the firstfruit of that WORD, according to John - - - but many people did not know that the WORD was God's PLAN. So when God says, "Today, I have become your Father" - why not offer him congratulations? To say that Jesus was just God in disguise as a Man is just terrible!

Acts 13:32-33 (NIV)

"We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: "'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'"

13. on 11 Sep 2010 at 3:52 am¹³ David

DT,

You are right with the time line. For some reason I was correlating it with the timeline of the blatant forgery found in 1 John (5:7). It was in some material I was going over before forming a response. Lots of things rattling around up there.

MC,

From a scriptural standpoint, denying the trinity has nothing to do with denying the father or the son. It is the Nicene creed that says one is not a Christian if they deny the trinity. I will affirm until my face is blue that Jesus is the Messiah, the son of God come in the flesh, died and was raised on the third day. I just don't see any rational explanation for the ambiguity of the interpreted passages (when read to interpret the trinity), in contrast to the very specific passages that state that God is God, and He alone.

Sure the word was with God, and was God and through the word everything was made, and finally the word became flesh and dwelt with us. But to interpret this passage to mean that Jesus is God, is quite a stretch. There are passages in the bible that specifically state the opposite. Which has more weight? Explicitly written scripture written in detail, or theories based upon what the text might be implying but never says plainly or directly...

I won't deny that Jesus is divinely appointed, he is the divinely chosen agent of God, upon whom all power and authority given by the Father rests. I won't deny he has equivalence of form (character/mind/will/purpose) with God; in that the fullness of God is in him. To me, he is divine in his own right, and so is anyone who has followed his example and subsequently learned obedience, yielding their own will to that of the Father's. That is after all the purpose of discipleship, and

Jesus' very own wish. Where does the Trinity fit into this facet of God's plan? If Jesus is the first fruits of zion, what happens when the rest are begotten of God?

Point blank, the Trinity is never discussed in the bible. It certainly is never even found in any teaching that ever had anything to do with salvation or the kingdom of God. It certainly is not found to grace the lips of Jesus, not once. It's an unbiblical doctrine which does nothing but create divisiveness. Some trinitarian "correctore" even took it upon themselves to forge pro-trinitarian verses hundreds of years later. (see beginning of post). If the trinity was scriptural it would be found in our bibles stated specifically without tons of passages contradicting the very notion of a trinity. The fact is that it is nothing more than a pagan idea that crept it's way into church dogma.

If spreading the the idea that The God of Israel is one God (not a triune) and that He alone is God, and that his human Messiah was born, became obedient, grew in wisdom and died for our sins and God resurrected Him from the dead... then I'm guilty and I have absolutely no remorse. Monotheism isn't a dangerous teaching, it's biblical.

The trinity is pagan in origin, and has more to do with Plato than Jesus and not anything hebraic. It is the teaching that turns the one true God into three, replaces messiah, turns him into an idol and dethrones God himself with his very own messiah. If it is so divinely inspired, then why has it inspired it's "spirit-filled" pioneers to massacre billions of innocent people in it's name? That my friend, could never be of God.

14. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 7:34 am*¹⁴ *Marc Taylor*

There are no passages which teach the Lord Jesus is not God. The word "Trinity" is not found but its concept is. There is more than one way to express this truth claim concerning the truth of the Triune God.

By stating Jesus has all power proves that He is the Almighty for omnipotence (all power) means to be Almighty.

15. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 10:39 am*¹⁵ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc Taylor

You said, "There are no passages which teach the Lord Jesus is not God."

Have you ever thought that this might be because no one in Jesus' time would have dared to imply that a human could be God. There are many prophesies regarding the Messiah and not one of them even hints that the coming Messiah would actually be God pretending to be a human. As a matter of fact they say exactly the opposite.

In Deuteronomy 18:15 Moses says, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet ‘LIKE ME’ from among you, ‘FROM YOUR BROTHERS’ - it is to him you shall listen -” (ESV - emphasis mine)...

16. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 11:54 am*¹⁶ *Frank D*

Marc, God annointed Jesus with power. If Jesus was (in your words) God, why was God with him?

Acts 10:38 (REV)

that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with
holy spirit and with power, who
went around doing good and healing
all those who were being oppressed
by the Slanderer, for God was with
him.

17. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 1:14 pm*¹⁷ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc

In msg. #16 Frank D makes an excellent point. Also in Mathew 28:18 it says, “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.’..” (ESV)

If Yeshua/Jesus was actually God than ‘WHO’ was it that gave him “All authority in heaven and on earth.” This verse also implies that if this authority was given to him, then it could (potentially) be taken away from him at some point. In other words it wasn’t inherently his to begin with since it had to be given to him.

Therefore your statement that, “By stating Jesus has all power proves that He is the Almighty for omnipotence (all power) means to be Almighty” doesn’t seem to match with what Yeshua/Jesus himself is saying. At least in my humble opinion anywaze...

18. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 1:55 pm*¹⁸ *robert*

Thomas

I think Frank’s point poses a major problem for all trinitarian doctrines and most unitarian doctrines because how could Jesus be God or the son of God literally at birth and not possess the Holy spirit and power which all 4 gospels state happened at his baptism. Neither of the doctrines can exist under this statement in Acts 10:38 .

hope everyone is having a blessed Sabbath

19. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 6:13 pm*¹⁹ *Marc Taylor*

Doubting Thomas,

If God wanted to tell us that the Lord Jesus is not God He would not have recorded in the Bible passages that teach He is God. Christ is like Moses. Like doesn't necessitate exact correspondence.

You assume the power wasn't inherently Christ's. Why couldn't Christ willingly choose not to employ it? Again, any Being that has "all-power" (omnipotent, i.e., Almighty) is by definition "God".

Frank,

God can simply denote the "Father". It is His primary (although not His exclusive) appellation.

20. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 7:41 pm*20 *Doubting Thomas*

Marc

I don't know of any Bible passages that teach that Yeshua/Jesus is God. I just know of verses that people say they think indirectly infers that he is God. If He were God this would have been an important revelation that wouldn't have been left for future generations to have to indirectly infer from scriptures that don't directly or clearly say so.

Why doesn't the Bible come straight out and say Yeshua/Jesus is God???

21. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 7:48 pm*21 *Doubting Thomas*

Marc

You said, "Again, any Being that has 'all-power' (omnipotent, i.e. Almighty) is by definition 'God'.."

Like I said, not if that Being has to depend on another Being to give him, or grant him this "all-power" in order for him to possess it...

22. *on 11 Sep 2010 at 7:59 pm*22 *Antioch*

Marc,

Thank you for your discussion. I disagree with you for now, but I appreciate you taking the time to present your case, particularly in a forum where you are outnumbered.

When you Google 'trinity', you get mostly criticism of the doctrine. It is helpful to hear trinitarians defend their position against the unitarian criticism. It helps me in my desire to better understand God.

Peace

23. on 11 Sep 2010 at 8:08 pm²³ David

I agree with Antioch. It takes some hutzpah for people to state their views in light of being outnumbered. Nevertheless, Marc's points in the debate are informative and appreciated here.

Shabbat Shalom guys!

24. on 11 Sep 2010 at 8:22 pm²⁴ Marc Taylor

Doubting Thomas,
Why can't the All-Powerful Being (Christ) "choose" to do so?
The Bible does come right out and teach that the Lord Jesus is God (See my Second Constructive above). There are more than one ways to express this truth claim.

Thank you Antioch and David.

25. on 11 Sep 2010 at 9:22 pm²⁵ David

(In response to #24)

Marc,

I'm familiar with the passages and I see the logic. I heard this once in a debate where the primary argument was the usage of similar phrases (by God and Jesus) such as "I AM" and "First/Last". The argument was that Because Jesus spoke using the same words as God, that he must be God.

The book opens up as:

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John"

Clearly this is a revelation that YHVH gave to Jesus.

In Dueteronomy 18:18 we have:

I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

Here we have it stating that Jesus is a prophet, and he will speak the very words of YHVH.

John 7:16

“So Jesus told them, “My message is not my own; it comes from God who sent me.”

Again, Jesus acts only on God’s behalf, as God’s mouthpiece. Whatever he has, it is given to him of the Father. He also was not always the Son, he was not the Son until he was begat. He was always going to “be” the Son, but he became the first born son and the messiah after his baptism by John.

Moshiach/Messiah/Christ is the Sheliach (agent) of God. All such divinely appointed agents, magistrates, and kings were refereed to as Elohim in the Hebrew Bible (Theos in the Greek). Messiah is supposed to be God’s vicar, whom God rules the world vicariously through.

If an agent were to “rebel” against God, he would no longer be God’s agent and would loose all anointing and power and authority. We see this happen time and again in the Tenakh/OT with the corrupt rulers and leaders of old.

Jesus speaking the words that God speaks does not identify him as God, the bible is clear that he is speaking God’s words in his stead. Unlike any other prophet however, this is the King Messiah, he speaks for God always. Jesus speaking the words of the father do not make him God. It is the fulfillment of prophesy that God would raise a prophet ruler, and put his very own words in his mouth. Jesus is the living, breathing pure manifestation of the word of God made flesh, he is our example to live by as we are his disciples, friends, and brother; children of God and he is our King. The person and role of Jesus must be understood in the context of the entirety of scripture, precept upon precept. A few ambiguous statements, cannot be interpreted in a way that alters or nullifies the rest of scripture, as the “scriptures cannot be broken...”

The two points given in Revelation as “self identifiers” really only prove that Jesus speaks the Father’s words.

26. on 11 Sep 2010 at 10:03 pm26 Doubting Thomas

David

I agree that Marc has a lot of hutzpah to state his views in light of being outnumbered. I also appreciate the fact that he is very polite and respectful (unlike some other people we’ve had who came to this site). I also like what you said in msg. #25 above. It is very eloquent and to the point. I wish I had the ability to write as well as that.

You quoted Deuteronomy 18:18 which basically repeats what is said in 18:15, “The Lord will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers....”

I don't see how God can be considered to be someone "from among you, from your brothers..." There are also many scriptures that say that the Messiah will be the son of David. I don't see how God can be considered to be the son of David either. The scriptures also say that the Messiah will be prophet like Moses. I don't see how God can be considered to be a prophet like Moses.

From my point of view this pretty much rules out the possibility of God being the Messiah that was prophesied in so many of the OT scriptures...

27. on 11 Sep 2010 at 10:06 pm²⁷ Marc Taylor

Hello David,

Elohim could refer to others for it is a general title of authority. However the same can not be said concernin such appellations as "the First and the Last".

Furthemore, the fact that he is the proper recipient of prayer demonstartes that He is God. Only an omnipotent Being can act on such prayers received. And an omnipotent Being is by defintion an Almighty Being.

28. on 12 Sep 2010 at 12:45 am²⁸ RogCat

Jesus was the first one to die on the cross as his reward for completing his creation - - - and he is the last of Man who will have to do that. He is also the first BORN Son of God who had to return to Earth to finish out a life as a human - - - and he is the last who will ever be asked to do that, again.

On the other point, I seem to recall that Jesus said that if we pray to God in Jesus' name, then the Father will grant our requests. I can't recall anywhere that Jesus said to pray to him. Jesus did say, of course, that he was the mediator between us and God - - - that nobody goes to the Father, except through the Son. If we factor the Trinity into this, the words of Jesus make NO SENSE at all!

John 16:22-23 (NIV) {Emphasis added}

So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

John 14:6 (NIV)

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

29. on 12 Sep 2010 at 3:53 am²⁹ Jaco

Sean,

Those who reject the Trinity and then spread their pernicious teaching that it is not true are guilty of spreading spiritual death to which they will be held accountable.

Is it only me, or do is this a desperate scare attempt? Can we please get something more substantial from this gentleman? Not only that, but doesn't his feeble statement above violate one of the terms of the blog?

“Communication Policy”

7. Disrespect towards others (i.e. sarcastic statements intended to belittle, inappropriate labeling of people, overly critical demeanor towards a certain person, etc.)

Regards,

Jaco

P.S. I hope in future the debaters we have on here will have something more solid to present. I do not think that the mindless parroting and repeating of unproven statements without substantial argumentation prove anything. We expect this from high-school students, really.

30. *on 12 Sep 2010 at 6:40 am*30 Marc Taylor

RogCat,

The context of John 16:23 has to do with the apostles not asking Christ anymore questions concerning His figurative teachings concerning His resurrection (John 16:18). “In that day” refers to when the apostles will see the Lord Jesus after He is resurrected (John 14:19, 20). The conjunction “and” (kai) that begins verse 23 relates to what was stated in verse 22 - the resurrection. “Therefore you too now have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one takes your joy from you. “AND” in that day you will ask Me no question.”

There are plenty of passages where Christ is properly prayed to. Some of them are:

Acts 1:24, 25

Acts 7:59

Romans 10:13

1 Corinthians 1:2

2 Corinthians 12:8

2 Timothy 2:22

Revelation 22:3

Revelation 22:20

Furthermore Christ is the recipient of several doxologies (hymns of praise to God) as found in 2 Timothy 4:18; 2 Peter 3:18 and Revelation 1:5, 6.

Jaco,

Get something substantial?

1. How about accepting what the lexicons say concerning the First and the Last”?”
2. What of the fact that we have only one Master in heaven and that is the Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 1:4) but the Father is also our Master?
3. How about that Christ properly receives prayer demonstrates His omnipotence which is the same thing as saying he is Almighty?
4. What of the fact that the Father was not being prayed to by Jacob in Genesis 48:16?

Before making unfounded assertion please do some more investigation to what I have asserted.

31. *on 12 Sep 2010 at 7:59 am*³¹ Ray

When I give Jesus a praise to God,
I praise his holy name.
From this age forward, forever the same,
Just as he was before the beginning began.

What I’m saying is this, that to praise the name of Jesus is to speak the wonderful works of God. (For it is God who worketh in him to will and to do of his good pleasure. It’s in the word. This is a great mystery.)

32. *on 12 Sep 2010 at 8:14 am*³² Marc Taylor

By praying to Him one can not deny that He is omnipotent (Almighty).

33. *on 12 Sep 2010 at 8:46 am*³³ Doubting Thomas

Marc Taylor

When Yeshua/Jesus taught his disciples to pray he told them to pray “Our Father.” In other words to pray to Yeshua’s/Jesus’ Father as well as our Father. There is nothing wrong with saying the occasional prayer to Yeshua/Jesus who is sitting at the right hand of God and is our mediator. But from my reading of the scriptures the majority of our prayers and praises should be directed to the Father/Creator, God Almighty...

34. *on 12 Sep 2010 at 10:16 am*³⁴ Frank D

Genesis 48:14-16

14And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands (for Manasseh was the firstborn). 15And he blessed Joseph and said, “The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,

the God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day,
 16the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the boys;
 and in them let my name be carried on, and the name of my fathers Abraham and
 Isaac;
 and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”

Marc, So in your opinion, when Israel is saying “the angel who has redeemed me from all evil” you think Israel is referring to whom?

...please remember...

Hebrews 1:5

To which of the angels did God say at any time, You are my Son, this day I have given you being? or, I will be his Father, and he will be my Son?

So the question should be: What did Israel mean when he said “the angel who redeemed me from all evil”? It should not be assumed to refer to anyone other than an angel.

35. on 12 Sep 2010 at 12:15 pm35 Doubting Thomas

Marc,

In msg. #11 you said, “I agree that nowhere does it read in the bible, ‘To be a Christian is to be a Trinitarian. To deny the Trinity is to deny Christianity’ but it’s truth is clearly taught.”

The fact is that “it’s truth is (not) clearly taught” otherwise Danny and all the rest of us would not be having this conversation with you. What you actually mean to say is that in ‘your opinion’ it is inferred. And Danny and the rest of us have shown you that these verses can also be inferred to support our position as well.

If (as your claim) that we must all believe in the Trinity to achieve salvation, then why is it not ‘CLEARLY’ written in the scriptures that “To be a Christian is to be a Trinitarian.” Or that “To deny the Trinity is to deny Christianity.” If this really were a salvation issue than certainly the writers of the scriptures wouldn’t have just ‘hoped’ that future generations would properly infer this from ‘NON-SPECIFIC’ verses.

You went on to say in the same message, “A false God cannot save - only the true Triune God can save.”

If that were true certainly the writers of the scriptures would have made at least one unambiguous statement regarding the fact that God is a Triune God. The fact that there is no unambiguous verse demonstrates that this claim of yours above simply cannot be true. I personally believe that God will forgive anyone who has

mistaken beliefs about his nature (Trinity etc...). I think it is clear from the scriptures that God is much more interested in our behavior (how we treat others) than in what our beliefs might or might not be.

In msg. #19 you said, "If God wanted to tell us that the Lord Jesus is not God He would not have recorded passages in the Bible that teach He is God."

Again he did 'NOT' record any passages in the Bible that teach "He is God." You just claim that you can infer (indirectly) that he is God from your own personal interpretation of certain scriptures. If Yeshua/Jesus was God this would have been an important revelation. So, why is not clearly spelled out or stated anywhere in the scriptures that Yeshua/Jesus is God???

In the same msg. you also said, "Christ is like Moses. Like does not necessitate exact correspondence."

How can God Almighty be said to be like Moses. You must admit that a human being born in Bethlehem and who grew up to not only to be a great prophet, but the Messiah, as prophesied in the same chapter that said, "he would be like Moses, from among you, from your brothers" makes a lot more sense then trying to twist this prophecy around to try to fit your belief that the Messiah was actually God Almighty himself.

In msg. #24 you asked me, "Why can't the All-Powerful Being (Christ) choose to do so?"

Here you are claiming that Yeshua/Jesus gave up his "All Power" to someone else in order to become human. Then later on this other person gave him his "All Power" back again. The obvious question is, 'WHO' did Yeshua/Jesus give up his "All Power" to???

If you decide to answer this question it will also answer the unanswered question that I asked in msg. #17 which said, "If Yeshua/Jesus was actually God then 'WHO' was it that gave him 'All authority in heaven and on earth'???"

From what I can see you repeatedly say this verse infers this and that verse infers that and then you conclude that these things are clearly taught in the Bible. You must have different definition of what clearly taught means than I do. If the bible doesn't clearly and unambiguously state that 'Jesus is God' then the reality is it is only inferred (in your opinion). Danny and the rest of have shown you we infer these same verses to mean something else.

If the Bible doesn't clearly and unambiguously state that "To be a Christian is to be a Trinitarian" or that "To deny the Trinity is to deny Christianity" then the reality is it is only inferred (in your opinion). But you keep claiming "it's truth is clearly taught." In other words your conclusions in no way reflect your evidence.

In other words you can't infer something (indirectly) and then turn around and say it is clearly taught. At least that's the way I see it anyway...

36. on 12 Sep 2010 at 5:42 pm³⁶ Marc Taylor

Doubting Thomas,

In post #11 point #3 I pointed out that the Bible declares that the sum of God's word is truth (Psalm 119:160). The fact that Christ receives any prayers at all necessitates His omnipotence.

The Trinity is clearly taught but there will be those who simply refuse to accept it. Just because something is clear does not mean all will embrace it. That is true with many other things in life.

Frank,

Jacob is praying to this Messenger to bless His family in that they would grow into a multitude. The Lord Jesus is a descendant of Jacob. I am not asserting that it refers to anyone but the Messenger but it does prove that Jacob was not praying to YHWH here so thus He attributed omnipotence (the fact of being "Almighty") to someone else other than the Father.

37. on 12 Sep 2010 at 6:14 pm³⁷ Frank D

So, there is prayer to someone other than God....

38. on 12 Sep 2010 at 7:33 pm³⁸ Marc Taylor

Yes, and that being the Lord Jesus demanding that He is Almighty.

39. on 12 Sep 2010 at 9:00 pm³⁹ Ray

Though I pray to God at all times, I trust that Christians do at times address the Lord Jesus. I know that some do. One married couple that was in a group I was with once, prayed differently. One prayed to God the Father and the other one prayed to the Lord Jesus. One always prayed one way, the other always prayed the other way and they were happily married.

I do believe Jesus is the Lord Almighty who will judge heaven and earth. Jesus holds all the power of God Almighty, all the keys to the kingdom, and all the throne of God is his.

40. on 12 Sep 2010 at 10:26 pm⁴⁰ Doubting Thomas

Marc,

You said, "The fact that Christ receives any prayers at all necessitates his omnipotence."

Why? It makes perfect sense to me that the person who is sitting at the right hand of God and has been given all authority in heaven and on earth could also receive prayers. Especially since part of his job is being a mediator between us and God Almighty.

As far as omnipotence you continue to refuse to answer the question that I asked in msg. #17 and again in msg. #35 which asked, "If Yeshua/Jesus was actually God then 'WHO' was it that gave him 'All authority in heaven and on earth'???"

You said that you believe he chose to give up this "All Power". The obvious question that follows then, which you keep trying to avoid, is to 'WHO' did he choose to give up this "All Power" to??? And 'WHO' was this person that then chose to give this "All Power" back to him at a later date???

Like I have repeatedly said, if someone has to rely on another Being to give them 'All authority in heaven and on earth' then this person is obviously not omnipotent but dependent on this other Being (his Father/God Almighty) to give him, or grant him this authority.

I don't see how you can continue to say that Yeshua/Jesus is omnipotent, especially considering he clearly states that he does not know the day or the hour of the end times (or when he will return). In Mathew 24:36 Yeshua/Jesus says, "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only."

You also said, "The Trinity is clearly taught but there will be those who simply refuse to accept it. Just because something is clear does not mean all will embrace it."

How can you keep repeating over and over again that "The Trinity is clearly taught" when there is no scripture that explicitly (clearly/directly) states that Yeshua/Jesus is God nor is there any scripture that says explicitly (clearly/directly) that the Holy Spirit is God nor is the word Trinity found in any ancient document until near the end of the second century???

What do you mean by 'clearly taught'??? Do you mean that because you can imply this indirectly through various verses that your opinion on how we should interpret these verses is indisputable???

Do you mean that if someone else interprets these verses differently than you then their interpretation is therefore not 'clearly taught' since you disagree with this other interpretation???

You seem to like to make up your own definitions. If you can infer or imply something indirectly this somehow translates into 'clearly taught'. If you say that 3 independent and separate individuals are actually one person, then we are just to

accept this as fact, even though you have no clear, direct, implicit, or non ambiguous scripture to back you up.

It seems like what your actually saying is that, if you believe something is true than it therefore logically follows that it is 'clearly taught' and if someone else believes something to be true, that you don't agree with, then it logically follows that this other thing is not 'clearly taught'.

In my opinion for something to be 'clearly taught' it must be clearly, directly, and implicitly taught with no ambiguities. You can't just make a bunch of statements like, Yeshua/Jesus is God or the Trinity is necessary for salvation with no explicit, implicit, and clear scriptures to back you up, and then somehow claim it is 'clearly taught'.

But I have already explained all this to you in msg. #35 above and you keep ignoring everything that I have said (including the questions I repeatedly ask) and just keep stating the same things over and over again.

I'm not trying to be rude or anything but this is just the way it appears to me...

41. *on 12 Sep 2010 at 11:58 pm*⁴¹ *Marc Taylor*

Doubting Thomas,

Your comments are too long. The fact that Christ is able to act on the prayers He receives demands He is omnipotent. In fact, that is what kardiongwstes means in Acts 1:24. Some choose to deny and/or make up definitions for the Greek words involved when they are not in accord with one's theology. I hope this isn't the case here.

42. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 12:10 am*⁴² *robert*

Thomas

You are 100% correct in your views and your points are right on,
BUT you will never convince Mark because he refuses to see the true facts and meanings.

43. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 12:50 am*⁴³ *Marc Taylor*

Thanks for addressing kardiongwstes.

44. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 1:17 am*⁴⁴ *Antioch*

In Acts 10, Peter struggled with the issue of gentiles being baptized with the Spirit. Acts 10:47 Peter says, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

Substitute 'gentiles' with 'unitarians' (or 'trinitarians' as it is vice versa). Just one unitarian who has received the spirit renders the doctrine of the trinity unessential and therefore false.

45. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 2:29 am*⁴⁵ David

Marc,

Where in the bible does it say that Jesus accepts our prayers?

46. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 2:44 am*⁴⁶ David

Nevermind, I must have skipped over your post above.

47. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 3:06 am*⁴⁷ RogCat

Marc,

You said, "There are plenty of passages where Christ is properly prayed to."
You are in error, my friend. These are not prayers of adoration, but simply requests to GOD on behalf of Jesus. Jesus told the Apostles that they could ask anything of God in the name of Jesus.

Many of your references are simply prayers TO God, who is LORD.

However, on that point, God did instruct the Angels to worship HIS new Son, Jesus. But our worship should go, first, to God.

I contend that Jesus IS a MAN - - - the FIRST product of God's WORD (ie PLAN) to create His children. What's the problem with granting God His firstborn? The Trinity does just that! It denies that Jesus came in the flesh (Jesus did say that he was a son of MAN) - - - claiming, instead, that God came in the flesh — disguised, at that. I can just hear Satan claiming that his defeat was unfair, because Jesus was actually God - - - and nobody can beat God.

48. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 5:43 am*⁴⁸ Marc Taylor

RogCat,

Requests to God on the behalf of Jesus? No, they are directed TO Jesus.
Those who deny the Trinity basically fall into one of two errors. Chriss can be prayed to /worshiped but this does not prove that He is God. Unfortunately for them the Greek words don't accord at all with what they believe and second Christ is not prayed to. Unfortunately for them there are several passages that teach otherwise. If you or anyone else is so confident that hrist is not prayed To or is worshiped then have a personal debate with me concerning this subject.

49. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 8:29 am*⁴⁹ Danny Dixon

Re 48

I am translating directly from the 27th edition of the Nestle text at John 14:14:

“Whenever you ask me anything in my name I will do [it].”

The Greek is a little odd, and for that reason scribes tried to change it by either taking out the “me” or by changing the “me” to “the Father” to make it harmonize with John 16:23. But the manuscript evidence of the reading above “is adequately supported” by some of the best manuscripts “and seems to be appropriate in view of its correlation with *ego* [”I”] later in the verse” (Metzger, and others, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd Edition, p. 208).

Marc’s argument is not so much based on the point of whether it is this verse, accurate as it is, that Jesus can be prayed to but that *latreuo* is used of Jesus. I have seen no problem in this for a couple of reasons.

First I can accept that *latreuo* is reasonably applied to Jesus in Revelation 22:3 where “his” servants can be seen to refer back to either God or to the lamb in the verse. The Greek is ambiguous, but I do not see that as a problem.

It is because of John 5:23, which is reasonably understood that it is God’s it is granted by God that since he receives honor, the Son also may receive honor. With that authority that God has given to Jesus (“all authority in heaven and on earth,” Matthew 18:18) comes the ability to exercise that authority. Jesus’ omniscience, ability to answer prayer, etc. are not inherent, they are given to him by God.

Second is the fact that *latreuo* is used in Greek literature of those who have God’s image. I’ve discussed this already in my Rebuttal 2b as follows:

According to D. Steenburg, *latreuo* in early Christian literature demonstrates why Christ, who is not God, can receive worship. Regarding the thought that nowhere “do we find any suggestion that the worship of any exalted being other than God alone was admissible, let alone actual,” he observes that because “Adam had been worshipped may have provided a crucial warrant for the worship of Christ.” He cites *latreuo* applied to Adam in *The Sibylline Oracles*:

587God speaking says, “Behold, let us make man
588In a *form* altogether like our own,
589And let us give him life-sustaining breath;
590Him being yet mortal all things of the world
591*Shall serve*, and unto him formed out of clay
592We will subject all things.”

Milton S. Terry, translator. *The Sibylline Oracles*, 8:587-592. (p. 62)

This partly demonstrates why *latreuo*, translated “serve” above, is used of a human. Steenburg says “that it accounts for the use of *morphe* [form]” because Adam is seen as being in the form *morphe* or image of God, justifying using *latreuo* of him. He then shows how this also accounts for Adam-Christ Christology found in Philippians 2:6-11.

Here, the pre-existent Christ, rejects the notion of grasping at equality with God but chooses to humble himself and become a human servant, willing to die on a cross. Thus he is given glory and honor for what he has done. (See D. Steenburg, “The Worship of Adam and Christ as the Image of God,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 39 [1990], pp. 96-97).

I don’t think Marc has addressed this very significant point.

Exegesis involves acknowledging how words are used in the target language. The word *latreuo* is used of a human, namely Adam, in a passage of writing that is even thematically cogent to the present discussion. Will Marc address it. It is a usage fit for discussion of *why* it is so used. But that has been done: The reasonable explanation is that if one is in God’s image, if one has that *granted* authority, one may properly be served as *latreuo* describes. That, of course, has been my argument all along.

50. on 13 Sep 2010 at 5:58 pm50 Doubling Thomas

Marc,
You said, “Your comments are too long.”

I am sorry if you think my comments are too long, but at least I try to explain why I believe what I believe. I suppose if I were like you and just repeatedly stated my beliefs without any explanation, then my messages would probably be as short as yours. However this wouldn’t make for much of a conversation would it???

You also said, “The fact that Christ is able to act on the prayers He receives demands He is omnipotent.”

No it doesn’t. Like I have repeatedly said, over and over again, it just means that he was given “All authority in heaven and on earth” just like it says in Mathew 28:18. In msg. #17 I quoted word for word what it says in Mathew 28:18 (ESV version). Then (for the first time) I asked you, “WHO was it that gave him “All authority in heaven and on earth???” This verse clearly has Yeshua/Jesus saying that it was given to him by someone.

I have repeated this above question several times now. I have even expanded it (in both msg. #35 + #40) to ask, “WHO did he choose to give this ‘All Power’ up to ???” Since you seemed to imply that you believed that Yeshua/Jesus chose to give

up his “All Power” as you put it. If I am misunderstanding you, then please explain what it is that you actually mean.

It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to have a conversation with someone that refuses to explain why it is they believe something, and then on top of that also refuses to answer repeated questions concerning what their beliefs are...

51. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 6:55 pm*⁵¹ *Marc Taylor*

All authority means all power - omnipotent = Almighty

The Father gave it to Him.

If anyone has all power for any period of time then that necessitates they are Almighty.

Thanks for not rambling on so much.

52. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 10:14 pm*⁵² *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,

Thanks for explaining yourself clearly. You said, “The Father gave it to Him.”

This is exactly what I believe as well. The part of the Trinitarian doctrine that I don’t understand is, if Yeshua/Jesus is God then that means he is his own Father. So how could he give the “All Power” to himself??? I’m not trying to be trite, I really don’t understand how you can reconcile the fact that Yeshua/Jesus is supposedly independent and separate from the Father, and yet at the same time be the same person as the Father.

You also said, “If anyone has all power for any period of time then that necessitates they are Almighty.”

Like I have repeatedly said, not if they have to rely on someone else for that power. If the “All Power” was given to Yeshua/Jesus then it couldn’t have inherently been his to begin with. If you inherently had a good sense of humor, then someone couldn’t turn around and give you a good sense of humor.

You also said, “Thanks for not rambling on so much.”

I will try not to ramble in the future. My wife use to say I rambled as well...

53. *on 13 Sep 2010 at 10:40 pm*⁵³ *Marc Taylor*

Hello DT,

Not sure what you mean how Christ is His own Father. He isn’t. They are of the same Being but not Person.

There are passages which demonstrate He is God while others demonstrate His distinctiveness.

Even if someone had to rely on someone for that power it would not negate being Almighty. Why couldn't Christ willingly relinquish the use of all power while on earth to the Father and agree that he would receive it back again at His exultation? TDNT: Elsewhere, however, it is said of the Redeemer during His earthly life that He has laid aside His power and appeared in lowliness and humility, Mt. 11:29; 12:18-21; 2 C. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-8 -> kenosis 3, 661, 13-28, cf. the temptation of Jesus, Mt. 4:8 f. par. Lk. 4:5 f. Thus, when the full power of Jesus is occasionally mentioned during the time of His humiliation, it is merely a proleptic fact. A new situation is brought into being with the crucifixion and resurrection. The Chosen One seizes the full power which He had from the beginning of the world, Mt. 28:18: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (5:895, pas - Reicke).

I am thankful for word limits in debates. I know some things need to be explained but I have so very often seen people go on and on like it was some kind of 2 hour sermon.

54. on 13 Sep 2010 at 11:47 pm 54 Doubting Thomas

Marc,

You said, "Not sure what you mean how Christ is his own Father. He isn't. They are of the same being not person."

Thank you for clarifying what you believe on this. I still don't really understand how someone could be of the same being and yet at the same time be a different person. To me a human being is one person. Two human beings are two people, etc... I do realize that there are a lot of people that share your belief in the Trinity, but the basic concept just doesn't make any sense to me.

You also said, "Why couldn't Christ willingly relinquish the use of all power while on earth to the Father and then agree that he would receive it back again at his exultation?"

I personally don't believe Yeshua/Jesus existed (other than being planned from the beginning) prior to his birth in Bethlehem. I know there is a wide variety of beliefs, even on this site, about this.

You also said, "I know some things need to be explained but I have so often seen people go on and on like it was some kind of 2 hour sermon."

I didn't mean to be sermonizing. I was just trying to explain my point of view to the best of my ability. I am far cry from being a great writer. May the peace of God be with you and with all of us...

55. on 14 Sep 2010 at 12:11 am 55 Marc Taylor

The nature of God is not predicated on how man arbitrarily chooses to think (reason) about Him (Acts 17:29) but rather on how Scripture actually reveals Him (Acts 17:11). Even “now we see in a mirror dimly” when it comes to knowing the things of God (1 Corinthians 13:12).

2. Those who reject the deity of Christ because it can not be fully understood readily affirm their own existence despite having an incomplete understanding of its physical and spiritual composition (Matthew 5:36; 6:27; Romans 7:15-25). Furthermore, we should not reject the omniscience nor the greatness of God despite the fact that both are beyond the reach of complete human understanding (Psalms 139:6; 145:3).

3. If one can accept the Scriptural testimony concerning the acts of God (miracles) then we should accept from the same Scriptures describing the nature of God even though both can not be fully explained.

Sorry if I came across that you were sermonizing.

56. on 14 Sep 2010 at 3:02 am ⁵⁶ David

Marc,

If I may share a few things. This is not only for you, but for the entire group as well. I want to apologize ahead of time if this post seems long.

I think you are correct and have established that Jesus/Yeshua is All-Powerful/Omnipotent. “All power in heaven and earth has been given to Me.” Matthew 28:18 I too would also agree that this is self explanatory and that Jesus is all-powerful.

I still don't think that his authority or even plausible divinity of Messiah has anything to do with proving that God exists as a Triune. Although I am not a trinitarian, I too agree that God and Messiah are united in the same being and are also separate persons. However I also do not believe the Holy Spirit is a person. In the hebrew language Holy Spirit is “Ruach HaKodesh”, literally “Breath of The Holy”. I do however believe that all three are united in one way or another.

I myself reserve a view of God that I've come to from profound personal revelation. Later I was astonished to find that it was also shared by some Jewish sages, namely the late Hassidic Rabbis Israel ben Eliezer, the Baal Shem Tov and Rabbi Menahem Mendel. It is a quasi-panentheistic view of the person of God. This is a view that I'm not sure how many hold it here as well, but there might be a couple.

This view still maintains that God is still one singular person with His own personality. He is still an “I”, if you will. Although He is still one person, His being permeates all of (but not limited to) created existence, especially humankind, and especially those who believe and are obedient to walk in His ways.

A good illustration of this would be of likening God to the ocean. Creation and mankind and we are like drops of water and the marine life who inhabit the ocean. We make our home in the ocean, receive our sustenance from the water, even our physical bodies are of mostly water. We cannot exist or survive outside of that water. There is a complex unity at play here.

The exegesis of the Rabbis explains that God “expanded” to make room for creation within Himself. All of creation took place “inside” the void created when He expanded. He filled the void inside with light, and then creation unfolded. Thus according to the Rabbis, everything we know is inside of God, and besides/outside God there is nothing; outside of God there can’t be anything... as “there is none else beside Him”.

Under this paradigm people can chose to operate in one of two ways. Either in obedience to God serving Him in loving kindness to the benefit of the whole of creation; and by doing create a better world. On the other hand working in self-serving ways.

Just like the tiniest of members within a body, we can choose to be either life-giving or cancerous. We can help the whole of creation, or work to destroy it. By blessing one another we are blessing not only our selves but God who is in us, or we can sin against each other and God.

This paradigm maintains that Satan is subordinate to God, and only exists to make our choice to be obedient to God meaningful. It also means we should see humankind as a whole, regardless of being divided into groups, nationalities, religions, races, creeds. Instead of discerning through such aforementioned superficial means, we should discern by whether or not we see the fruits of God’s spirit within a persons life and actions.

Thus, God is the true “person”. His soul is the collective soul of every living being and then some. His actual make-up is completely unfathomable as this concept of Him cannot even be truly defined, shaped, drawn, spoken of. It cannot even be conceived or grasped by the human mind. Although it seems He would be impersonal by nature he is not, as he has revealed himself to us in Jesus and the scriptures. The only way to define Him is by how great He is and isn’t, and what His character is or isn’t.

This worldview allows God to be present in every smile, every helping hand, every sustaining drink of water or food. He is there in children’s laughter, in a warm hug, in a piece of chocolate cake... He is there in our less than desired moments, tribulations, tests, and trials.

Because of His nature and our relation to Him in this new sense, no matter how far one can possibly travel, could we get away from him. Even if it were possible to travel to the edges of the universe and beyond, God would still be there.

Because of our relation to him in this sense, if one could possibly travel “outside” the reaches of God so that they could look upon Him and actually “see” him, they would die. None would live, because it would be impossible to live outside of God.

I believe God is the supreme source of life, from whom all things receive their life-giving spirit. Christ is our physical King and our leader, the “Prince” of God that will sit on David’s throne. We are his loyal subjects that are members/cells of his body. We all have a part to play in His kingdom, and it is up to us whether or not we are in or out.

Thus I too believe God is a complex unity, thus I see a “form” of trinity of sorts; albeit not the Nicean flavor. Nicean Trinitarianism not only doesn’t make sense to me scripturally, but also because it conceptually *removes* us from God - placing Him and His Messiah somewhere “outside” of us, leaving us as orphans - making our God foreign to us.

Just sharing, for the purpose of sharing. I apologize if my post is rather long, but thought I should explain since it is a view that some may or may not be familiar with.

57. on 14 Sep 2010 at 3:53 am⁵⁷ Marc Taylor

Hello David and thank you.

I suppose a future debate could be about the personality/Deity of the Holy Spirit.

In panentheism is God both finite and infinite as well as temporal and eternal at the same time?

58. on 14 Sep 2010 at 4:14 am⁵⁸ Danny Dixon

Re 48

Sorry, All, but I’ve been trying to post this since 7:30 CST this morning. I’ll try yet again.

I am translating directly from the 27th edition of the Nestle text at John 14:14:

“Whenever you ask me anything in my name I will do [it].”

The Greek is a little odd, and for that reason scribes tried to change it by either taking out the “me” or by changing the “me” to “the Father” to make it harmonize with John 16:23. But the manuscript evidence of the reading above “is adequately supported” by some of the best manuscripts “and seems to be appropriate in view

of its correlation with *ego* [”I”] later in the verse” (Metzger, and others, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd Edition, p. 208).

Marc’s argument is not so much based on the point of whether it is this verse, accurate as it is, that Jesus can be prayed to but that *latreuo* is used of Jesus. I have seen no problem in this for a couple of reasons.

First I can accept that *latreuo* is reasonably applied to Jesus in Revelation 22:3 where “his” servants can be seen to refer back to either God or to the lamb in the verse. The Greek is ambiguous, but I do not see that as a problem.

It is because of John 5:23, which is reasonably understood that it is God’s it is granted by God that since he receives honor, the Son also may receive honor. With that authority that God has given to Jesus (“all authority in heaven and on earth,” Matthew 18:18) comes the ability to exercise that authority. Jesus’ omniscience, ability to answer prayer, etc. are not inherent, they are given to him by God.

Second is the fact that *latreuo* is used in Greek literature of those who have God’s image. I’ve discussed this already in my Rebuttal 2b as follows:

According to D. Steenburg, *latreuo* in early Christian literature demonstrates why Christ, who is not God, can receive worship. Regarding the thought that nowhere “do we find any suggestion that the worship of any exalted being other than God alone was admissible, let alone actual,” he observes that because “Adam had been worshipped may have provided a crucial warrant for the worship of Christ.” He cites *latreuo* applied to Adam in *The Sibylline Oracles*:

587God speaking says, “Behold, let us make man
588In a *form* altogether like our own,
589And let us give him life-sustaining breath;
590Him being yet mortal all things of the world
591*Shall serve*, and unto him formed out of clay
592We will subject all things.”

[Milton S. Terry, translator. *The Sibylline Oracles*, 8:587-592. (p. 62)]

This partly demonstrates why *latreuo*, translated “serve” above, is used of a human. Steenburg says “that it accounts for the use of *morphe* [form]” because Adam is seen as being in the form *morphe* or image of God, justifying using *latreuo* of him. He then shows how this also accounts for Adam-Christ Christology found in Philippians 2:6-11.

Here, the pre-existent Christ, rejects the notion of grasping at equality with God but chooses to humble himself and become a human servant, willing to die on a cross. Thus he is given glory and honor for what he has done. (See D. Steenburg,

“The Worship of Adam and Christ as the Image of God,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 39 [1990], pp. 96-97).

I don't think Marc has addressed this very significant point.

Part of exegesis involves acknowledging how words are used in the target language. The word *latreuo* is used of a human, namely Adam, in a passage of writing that is even thematically cogent to the present discussion. Will Marc address it. It is a usage fit for discussion of *why* it is so used. But that has been done: The reasonable explanation is that if one is in God's image, if one has that *granted* authority, one may properly be served as *latreuo* describes. That, of course, has been my argument all along.

59. on 14 Sep 2010 at 5:05 am 59 Marc Taylor

Danny,

I already addressed it. You are confusing is and ought. Just because something is happening doesn't mean it ought to happen. Latreuw was rendered unto idols but that doesn't mean it ought to have been (Acts 7:42; Romans 1:25).

60. on 14 Sep 2010 at 1:10 pm 60 Danny Dixon

Marc:

I am confusing nothing. I understand that in exegesis of biblical texts it is important to see how a word is used in the context of the community where the word appears.

My point is that *latreuo* was used in the Greek community in various ways, including worship of false gods, worship of men, and worship of the one true God. Actually, long before the Greeks knew about the one true God, they were already using it of their own gods.

Your point seemed to be that if the word is used at all, then it was to be used to identify a god or The One True God. The question of what people OUGHT to do or what IS true of what they do is a secondary issue with respect to the terminology.

When I demonstrated that *latreuo* is also used in the Greek community in the *Sibylline Oracles* of a man, namely Adam, I was trying to illustrate that the Greek culture can support the usage of the word in its application to God, to gods, or to men. That being the case, it is not improper for one to understand that such a word is therefore NOT limited to worship of God/gods.

It becomes a question of *theological understanding and justification* as to whether or not *latreuo* should be used in this or that case. That being said, the real

questions, which you are not understanding, are these: Is there ever an appropriate time to render *latreuo* to God? The answer is Yes. Is there ever an appropriate time to render *latreuo* to gods? The answer is No. Is there ever an appropriate time to render *latreuo* to men? The answer is Yes.

There is adequate biblical warrant to worship Yahweh. There is adequate biblical proscription of worship to pagan gods. There is adequate biblical support for recognizing an entities *agent* as being considered equal to the sender in contexts where authority is to be appreciated.

The theological question is what is to be considered here, not the lexical question for clearly the lexical evidence shows that in a certain circumstance context would permit giving *latreuo* to a man, namely, when that person exists in the image of God. That Adam is a person to be properly considered as one in the image of God in the sense of authority may be a theological question.

That there is a recognized body of evidence considering Adam-Jesus Christology is clear (See James Dunn's *Christology in the Making*, 2nd edition, or his comments on Philippians 2:6ff, and you will see that I am travelling well worn ground in the scholarly world on even the Trinitarian side.) You OUGHT to deal with the argumentation of the scholarly article that I cited, that Jesus was one who was in the image of God as Adam was in the image of God (See the *eikon morphe* synonymic relationship as discussed there) to see why it could easily be considered theologically permissible to apply *latreuo* to Christ the man.

True, you have cited scholars who provide no argument for their positions, but who have a leaning for a Trinitarian point of view. This is not any more helpful to the readership than it would be for me simply to cite scholars who hold a Unitarian point of view. It is the discussion and argumentation of the scholars that OUGHT to be weighed, not the names of the scholars associated with the points of view.

Danny Dixon

61. on 14 Sep 2010 at 5:58 pm61 *Doubting Thomas*

Marc (msg. #55),

You said, "The nature of God is not predicated on how man arbitrarily chooses to think (reason) about him (Acts 17:29) but rather on how scripture actually reveals him (Acts 17:11)."

I agree completely. Just like the Jews in Acts 17:11, I also carefully studied the scriptures with an open mind. That's how I came to my Socinian/Unitarian beliefs. This idea that you proposed above in msg. #53, that Yeshua/Jesus and God are of the same being, but not the same person, would have been a completely foreign idea to the Jews in that time period.

Even I can't understand how someone can be of the same being and yet not be the same person. Yet there is no evidence in the scriptures of Peter and the Apostles, or anyone else, trying to explain this brand new complex idea that 3 persons could exist together as one being. There is no evidence that the Scribes or Pharisees were upset that their 'One God' was being changed into a 'Three (persons) in One' type of God.

Arbitrarily thinking that God must be a Triune God does not make him so. Like I have said in my messages above you need to have at least one explicit, direct, clear passage that states this. You can't just take a bunch of various unspecific and vague passages, which we have shown you can be interpreted differently, and then infer or imply it to mean something that is apparently illogical and which goes against the common sense that God has given us.

There is no scripture that clearly says that Yeshua/Jesus is God or that clearly says that God died on the cross for our salvation. I have no problem with someone inferring something from scripture as long as it is logical, and makes sense. You can't expect someone to believe something that apparently doesn't make any sense...

David (msg. #56),

You said, "Although I am not a trinitarian, I too agree that God and Messiah are united in the same being and are also separate persons."

You went on to say, "Thus God is the true 'person'. His soul is the collective soul of every living being and then some."

If I am understanding you correctly, you are saying that all mankind are united in the same being (God) and are also separate persons as well. I guess that is one way to look at it. The way I look at it is that as God's children a part of God is within us and will guide us (if we are willing to listen to him).

What is a conscience???

Why are human's the only beings on earth that feel guilt, shame, etc...???

From my point of view, our conscience (or our heart) is God's nature that is within us. Since we are God's children, made in his image, then it is only logical that we would possess part of God's nature within each and every one of us. We are all given the choice of either following that nature (conscience/heart) or ignoring it and behaving no better than any other animal on the planet.

Whenever that nature shows, and our light shines for the world to see, God is proud of us. When we hide this nature/light that is inside of all of us, then God is ashamed of us. Of course I am just a layman, and this is all just my own personal opinion.

Shalom...

62. *on 14 Sep 2010 at 7:09 pm*⁶² *Marc Taylor*

Danny,

It doesn't matter if latreuw was used of Greek gods for we are dealing with the New Tetsamnet usage of the word. It is used only of God or of heathen deities. You have to make the decision as to which category Christ belongs.

DT,

The fact that Christ properly receives prayer is all the explanation needed that affirms He is omniscient and omnipotent - God. There is more than one way to express the truth claim other than saying "Jesus is God" and prayers to Him prove this. In fact, there is no Scripture that just says "Jesus is not God".

63. *on 14 Sep 2010 at 7:46 pm*⁶³ *Antioch*

"In fact, there is no Scripture that just says 'Jesus is not God'"

This is pretty close, considering Jesus referred to himself as 'son of man'...

Numbers 23:19

God is not a man, that he should lie,
nor a son of man, that he should change his mind.
Does he speak and then not act?
Does he promise and not fulfill?

64. *on 14 Sep 2010 at 7:57 pm*⁶⁴ *Marc Taylor*

Antioch,

At that time the Lord Jesus was not a man.

65. *on 14 Sep 2010 at 8:18 pm*⁶⁵ *Antioch*

I wince to think God parses words. That 'Yahweh echad' really means 3 in 1.

66. *on 14 Sep 2010 at 8:29 pm*⁶⁶ *Marc Taylor*

Refuted in post #63 so now changes the subject.

67. *on 15 Sep 2010 at 1:31 am*⁶⁷ *Jaco*

Good day,

I apologise to my fellow bloggers for my irregular participation lately. School, work and other exacting activities limit me immensely. I hope you'll understand.

To turn to our issues at hand...

1. How about accepting what the lexicons say concerning the First and the Last''?

Mr Taylor, you are in no way different from the naïve JW parroting what their Watchtower authorities have to say regarding many unique sectarian interpretations. Like those JWs, you can only repeat what interpretive "lexicons" have to say, can't you? You haven't provided the interpretive apparatus by which you reach your conclusion above. Logically speaking, thus, your conclusion is reached via one huge slippery slope of (yet unknown) logical leaps. The onus rests on you to show that sharing a title between two entities implies identity of the two entities.

We're all waiting for your logically sound exegesis.

2. What of the fact that we have only one Master in heaven and that is the Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 1:4) but the Father is also our Master?

I answered your statement above. The ball is in your court to refute what I have written. To refute, not repeat your refuted claim *ad nauseam*, please. I said:

Simple textual analysis and cognitive linguistics would have us conclude that the speaker (Jesus) identifies His Father, someone distinct and separate from Jesus himself as THE (definite) ONLY (exclusive) TRUE (or actual) GOD (identity). This also forms a complex Name Jesus himself gives to someone ELSE, namely his Father. The parts of this name and the ownership of the complex Name necessitate the exclusivity thereof belonging to no one else, but the Father. The Only True God can only be a single Someone - grammatically and semantically. According to Jesus, this can only be his Father.

To return to Jude 4, you said,

In fact, Jude 1:4 states that the Lord Jesus is our only Master (despotes) but according to Acts 4:24 the Father is also our Master (despotes). If one insists that the Lord Jesus is not the true God based on John 17:3 then so too the Father is not our Master according to Jude 1:4.

Your argument fails on several grounds. This is what I said:

Between the two opposing fields, the Biblical Unitarians are the ones not committing the fallacy of undistributed middle. Two completely different contexts with two completely different senses in which Jesus and God are our Masters. Even humans can be owners or masters (1 Tim. 6:1, 2, Tit. 2:9). This is a false

analogy, since “Only True God” was a title given to the Sovereign of the Universe alone, and not remotely as commonplace as “despotes” used of husbands, slave-owners or rulers and anthropomorphically applied to Jehovah and Jesus, also in specific senses. This in no way violates the BU position: not hermeneutically, contextually, or semantically.

In fact, the Jude reference exists in a letter Jude himself concludes, saying,

“To the ***Only God our Saviour*** through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, might and authority for all past eternity and now and into all eternity, Amen.”

Jude’s understanding confirms the BU position that the Sovereign Lord, the Only God, acted *through* someone else, namely Jesus. Another confirmation of Biblical agency.

You are thus arguing from silence, since this text does not show how the “one master,” Jesus, relate to Almighty God. Despotes has a range of meanings or nuances in which it could apply to anyone. **Someone’s identity is the prerequisite for determining the extent to that one’s mastery or ownership over others. Not the other way around.** You conveniently over-extend its application by applying it absolutely to Jesus. Neither the word (despotes) nor Jude’s Christology (vs. 25) allows for your post-biblical doctrinal superimposition upon this text. While Jesus and Almighty God could be our “Masters” in various senses, “True God” can only be thus in one sense. Other than your Jude reference, the reference in John 17:3 clearly relates Jesus to Almighty God. Not only in the greater context, where Jesus is clearly an agent, but also immediately:

John 5:24, “‘I tell you the solemn truth, **the one who hears my message and believes the one who sent me has eternal life** and will not be condemned, but has crossed over from death to life.’”

John 12:44-45, “But Jesus shouted out, ‘The one who believes in me **does not believe in me, but in the one who sent me**, and the one who sees me sees the one who sent me.’”

You said yourself:

The expression “true God” is always used in Scripture in relation to the true God in contrast with false gods (idols) (2 Chronicles 15:3; Jeremiah 10:10, 11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9 and 1 John 5:20, 21).

Anyone else claiming the position of the True God should thus be regarded as false gods. Jesus states that Someone ELSE, OTHER than himself is the True God, also EXCLUDING himself, since his Father is the True God ALONE (monos).

I think many trinitarians reading this explanation and experiencing the doctrinal dilemma this obviously caused will expect you to do better than merely repeating your refuted claims.

3. How about that Christ properly receives prayer demonstrates His omnipotence which is the same thing as saying he is Almighty?

Your reference to “prayer” needs to be defined, please. What Greek word are you using? *Proskyneo*? *Proseuchomai*? Where is it unambiguously shown that *proskyneo* can only be rendered to God Almighty? Where is it unambiguously shown that the recipient of *proseuchomai* is Lord Messiah and not Lord God?

Secondly, since you would communicate to your friend on the other side of the planet through modern technology, how would you expect anyone else to communicate to our Lord Messiah? He is not absent, is he? He is certainly not in the grave, is he? Your either-or invention regarding prayer is indeed a false dilemma.

Thirdly, to argue that receiving *proskyneo*, since he is in heaven, by necessity makes Jesus Almighty God, is another point of special pleading. As the ultimate Sh’liach or Apostle (Heb. 3:1); our elder brother, as it were (Heb. 2:11-13); the one who received holy spirit without measure (John 3:34); perfected and immortal (2 Timothy 1:10, Revelation 1:18); given the position alongside Almighty God’s right hand (Matt 22:44, Ps. 110:1) as well as all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18) – designations and positions refuting any claim that he is Almighty God – it comes as no surprise that the Lord Messiah, the head of the church (Eph. 1:22, 23) is actively involved in the lives of his followers, necessitating communication via holy spirit which he received, but in no way requires him to be omniscient or Almighty by necessity. Jesus is clearly not omniscient (Matthew 24:36, Mark 11:12-14, Luke 2:52, John 11:34).

In his Upper Room Discourse, Jesus made his relation to God Almighty clear, even with regards to prayer, where he said,

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. The things I say to you men I do not speak of my own originality; but the Father who remains in me is doing his works. Also, whatever it is that you ask in my name, I will do this, in order that the Father may be glorified in connection with the Son. John 14:6, 10b, 13

Everything the Son is glorified in, even in prayerful requests, ultimately leads, not to his own exaltation and glorification, but to the glory of Almighty God, Our Father. The purposive clause in Jn 14.13 says, *hina doxasthe ho pater en tw uiw*. Ultimate glory to God, the Father, is its purpose. This is the biblical understanding of glory or doxology to the Son – namely, to ultimately glorifying God.

Trinitarians face the same dilemma Muslims are facing, when Muslims argue that the greatest prophet, Mohammed, was foretold in the OT and NT. Muslims' scanty and inductive pieces of evidence pointing to Mohammed's supposed coming dwindle in comparison to the overwhelming evidence pointing to Jesus as the Messiah. If Mohammed were to be greater than Jesus, why comparatively insignificant number of "evidence?" The same with prayer. The occasions where Christians are shown to have prayed to Jesus appear to be the exception, rather than the rule. It's a fallacy to claim that that in itself proves that Jesus is Almighty God – something Mr Taylor still has to show by necessity – and secondly, what other option do Christians have if they desire to communicate with their Messiah?

Kardiognwstes is an ability that only God can have by definition – since he is the omniscient God. It brings us to this syllogism:

If the Father is God, he will have the ability of kardiognwstes.

The Father is God

Ergo, the Father has kardiognwstes (modus ponens)

Your argument, Mr Taylor, amounts to Affirming the Consequent.

If Jesus is God, he will have the ability of kardiognwstes

Jesus has the ability of kardiognwstes

Ergo, Jesus is God

Humans, including Jesus, were capable of reading people's minds and hearts:

Acts 5:3, 4 "But Peter said: 'Ananias, why has Satan emboldened you to play false to the holy spirit and to hold back secretly some of the price of the field? Why was it that you purposed such a deed as this in your heart?'"

Acts 7:51 "Obstinate men and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, you are always resisting the holy spirit; as you forefathers did, so you do."

Acts 8:20, 22 "But Peter said to [Simon the magician]: 'May your silver perish with you, because you thought through money to get possession of the free gift of God. Repent, therefore, of this badness of yours, and supplicate the LORD that, if possible, the device of your heart may be forgiven you.'"

Even in Daniel, the angels are involved in responding to our prayers"

Daniel 10:12-13 "Then he said to me, 'Don't be afraid, Daniel, for from the very first day you applied your mind to understand and to humble yourself before your

God, your words were heard. **I have come in response to your words.** However, the prince of the kingdom of Persia was opposing me for twenty-one days. But Michael, one of the leading princes, came to help me, because I was left there with the kings of Persia.”

Since knowledge of the heart (kardiognwstes) is an ability necessitating the possessor of that ability to be Almighty God, then, honestly and consistently reasoned, Mr Taylor, you'll have to admit that the angel of Daniel, the apostle Peter and the disciple Stephen were all God. If not, why the inconsistency?

4. What of the fact that the Father was not being prayed to by Jacob in Genesis 48:16?

Are you serious? You are arguing in our favour here. Your unfounded presupposition, namely, that only God Almighty and no one else, including His Sh'liachim, may be prayed to, prevents you from accepting the text for what it says. It is in no way different from the implications of the text in Exodus 23:20-22, “I am going to send **an angel** before you to protect you as you journey and to bring you into the place that I have prepared. Take heed because of him, and **obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him.** But if you diligently **obey him** and do all that I command, then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and I will be an adversary to your adversaries.”

Someone other than Yahweh is prayed to, not because this someone was identical to Yahweh, but, true to its Hebraic setting, was representative of Yahweh.

It doesn't matter if latreuw was used of Greek gods for we are dealing with the New Testament usage of the word. It is used only of God or of heathen deities. You have to make the decision as to which category Christ belongs.

You're giving your level of expertise away here...Danny's quoting the Sybilline Oracles show what the presupposition pool of those Christians were. If isolating the first-Century NT from its cultural background works for your theology, try not to expect us Unitarians to practise that bad science...

The issues raised above demand an explanation, Mr Taylor. Your hit-and-run tactics does your position no good...

In Christ,

Jaco

68. on 15 Sep 2010 at 1:33 am68 Jaco

P.S. Mr Taylor, please provide evidence for your claim, namely, that Jesus had to be God to redeem us from sin. We need evidence from you proving that Jesus dying as a human is not good enough for redemption.

If, according to you, Jesus is God, and Jesus' God is God, would it be wrong to say that Jesus is the Father's God? Why (not)?

The nature of God is not predicated on how man arbitrarily chooses to think (reason) about Him (Acts 17:29)

That doesn't give any human free rein to impose upon God any flimsy figment of the mind and then justify it by stating that God is incomprehensible, does it? Something else you continue to repeat, albeit without reference, is the post-biblical invention of being/person dichotomy. Provide evidence for your anthropology, please. Where is the evidence that the ancient Jews distinguished between "Being" and "Person," so as to justify your relatively post-biblical novelty of "Three Persons in One Being." Your case is entirely based upon extra-biblical assumptions.

69. on 15 Sep 2010 at 2:45 am⁶⁹ Marc Taylor

Jaco,

Way too long I am not reading it. If you disagree with my position concerning Christ and want to debate one on one then contact Sean and we can arrange things. Word limits are beautiful for those who insist on giving their 4 hour sermons.

70. on 15 Sep 2010 at 3:55 am⁷⁰ Jaco

...nothing stopped you from reading other posters' long posts... Word limits are set for your and Danny's articles, not comments. YOU AGREED TO THESE RULES. Contrary to your pick-one slip-one theology, you cannot have it both ways. At least other posters read my comments, and probably experience a theological dilemma if they're trinitarian.

You have double standards. If you don't suffer from temporary memory loss, you'll recall that your quality of debating will be among the factors determining whether I'll agree to debating you. Thus far, your parroting style and hit-and-run tactics indicate to me that debating you will be a waste of my time...

Maybe once you've matured... 😊

Jaco

71. on 15 Sep 2010 at 4:24 am⁷¹ Marc Taylor

They weren't as long as yours.
 I know I agreed to the rules. I have no problem with that. People want to ramble on endlessly that is their choice.
 I don't really care if I debate you or not. Your position would be crushed anyway.
 You'll just look for any excuse to cop out of it.

Later....

72. on 15 Sep 2010 at 4:44 am 72 David

Hello David and thank you.

I suppose a future debate could be about the personality/Deity of the Holy Spirit.

In panentheism is God both finite and infinite as well as temporal and eternal at the same time?

Sorry for the long post again!!! It always feels like when I explain one thing, something else needs to be explained. (Preemptive apology!) ^_^

That would be an interesting debate, as it seems most debates are centered on the divinity of Jesus. It's quite a struggle it seems. Is he 100% divine, or 100% human? You can't have it both ways, they say, or can you? Could it be the way we are looking at it? Perhaps it's because many of us are not capable of seeing things as possibly being both. We tend to think in black and white terms. While it is true that some things are black and white, it is also true that some things are not. It always seems to end up that everyone is holding a piece of the truth. The divinity of Jesus is one of those non black/white issues. I've always sounded like a fool explaining it. "He is, but he isn't, but he is." Although I subscribe to the 100% divine and 100% human Jesus, I do not see him as "eternally begotten" or pre-existent. However, I am looking quite forward to reading your take on the person of the Holy Spirit sometime.

As far as panentheism goes, it differs from school to school. From what I understand the Jewish perspective of panentheism is that God is always eternal and infinite and with personality and consciousness. He remains omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient, even if there were no creation. He is considered to be, by the sages, 100% pure unconditional love/bestowal, bringing creation into existence with the plan of it becoming a grand self-expression of Himself. Of course, it always was in his eyes, but to us finite folk it is a long arduous and baffling process.

To explain creation under this view, it is said that each creation is a vessel made to contain God. Trees, animals, all forms of life and matter contain a "spark" of some sort in order to exist at all. All though it is not God, it contains God in some form, in some measure. In this view the Earth is a living breathing organism in

development, with different parts. This organism is an organ of a larger organism (Solar system), which is also a part of another organism. (Galaxy) and so on and so forth ad infinitum. Since we are built in His image, it is his plan that we be united/one as He is One.

Panentheism is different from pantheism, which states that the universe is God. If the universe were God and it were destroyed (God forbid) there would be no God. Panentheism is that all is *in* God, like the analogy with the ocean. Although God permeates creation, creation is not God. Creation can only be likened to God when it contains the same qualities, character, will and purpose as God; but even then, it receives everything it has, from God as it's source. Remove the source, creation dies.

On the flip-side, soak up as much source as possible, and creation has life and life increasing in abundance, infinitely. Thus when one actually gets to see the world to come, the perfect world in which God created to commune with us, it will be as spoken of in Isaiah 11:9-10

Also the cow and the bear will graze, Their young will lie down together, And the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious.

On a side, note, there are many Jews who hold this view that also view the theories of evolution as nothing more than the act of God's creation in action, unfolding in slow motion. From the big bang onward to the development of life on this planet are said to have unfolded in the same order of phases/days as in the Genesis account; if these events were witnessed from the position of standing where the earth was, when it happened. Also, the idea of the world reaching a symbiotic relationship as prophesied in Isaiah would be possible if evolution were in play. If this process is simply God's laws of nature in action, then the elimination of sin from the world would in time remove the need for predatory or self-preservation mechanisms from animals and plants. Terminal illness and natural disasters would end completely, as the planet would no longer need to treat humans as a disease or a threat. On that day, the word would finally become and be manifest as what it was set out to do and become from the beginning! May Christ return soon, in this lifetime!

P.S. Thanks for tolerating my very long posts Marc!

73. on 15 Sep 2010 at 5:18 am 73 David

(Added...)

Marc,

Here's something you might find interesting. This article is actually written by a trinitarian who holds panentheistic views. I find it interesting because it seems to, on a conceptual level, bridges a gap between unitarian and trinitarian viewpoints. The author goes on to discuss how it also has potential to bridge gaps between other religious views and Christianity, which I'm fond of, which allow for the gospel to be more easily heard by others.

<http://frimmin.com/faith/godinall.php>

74. *on 15 Sep 2010 at 5:38 am*74 David

^^^ Oops, maybe I spoke too soon... I'm not sure what the author of that article is. I assumed they were trinitarian because they wrote:

God is completely One, and yet, Triune and Infinite. Jesus is fully and completely human, but fully divine, as well.

They might be, but I'm not sure... The author appears to be a comparative spirituality/religion... or even a new-age buff of some sort or another. But the article in itself is a good article.

Sorry to flood the comments!

75. *on 15 Sep 2010 at 7:03 am*75 Jaco

Oh, Mr Taylor,

Did you really think that you could agree to a public debate, make up all kinds of nonsensical statements and expect all of us to simply except your extra-biblical inventions without responding to them? And then, when something substantial is provided, solidly exposing your horrendous claims for what they truly are, you refuse to reply to those. Instead, your cocky manners have you run around and challenge me for yet another debate, while you can't even take care of the one on-hand??? At what stage of anybody's progressive insanity does one tragically dare to take you seriously?

YOU were the one agreeing on the debate!

YOU agreed to the rules!

If you refuse to answer the questions, and you can't take the heat, that's YOUR problem!

YOU must have known that we wouldn't simply swallow down your theological musings. Instead of giving your demonstrably immature leanings away by threatening and challenging us when we refute your inventions, be a man and stick to the rules you agreed to.

I needn't explain myself on why I think you're wasting my time. NOT sticking to agreed rules, evading questions - in the minds of the sane - amounts to cowering.

Jaco

P.S If you don't like my long posts, think twice before posting what is unbiblical. If you don't, expect a crushing from truth lovers...

76. on 15 Sep 2010 at 9:20 am⁷⁶ Marc Taylor

I don't care how long you post. Go ahead and enjoy it. I'm just saying I am not wasting my time sitting through 4 hour sermons. "Words are like leaves; and where they most abound, Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found". It is you who hold to the unbiblical position that Christ is not prayed to. You want to believe that then go right ahead while the Bible teaches otherwise.

77. on 15 Sep 2010 at 11:19 am⁷⁷ Jaco

Mr Taylor,

If that's the way you feel, then fine.

Jaco

P.S. If you do take the time reading through my "4 hour sermon," you'll find that I don't have any issues praying to Jesus.

78. on 15 Sep 2010 at 3:24 pm⁷⁸ Danny Dixon

Re 74

"Triune" can be a tricky word. The Recovery Movement "developed by Witness Lee, on the basis of Isaiah 9:6 are Trinitarian although they use the word Triune a lot. But they also believe that Jesus is the Father.

Danny

79. on 15 Sep 2010 at 6:44 pm⁷⁹ Marc Taylor

Jaco,

Based on an earlier response you believe that Christ does not receive latreuw in Revelation 22:3, He does not receive proseuxomai in Acts 1:24 and in Acts 7:59 you don't think it is prayerful worship.

In all three passages the evidence is stacked quite high against you.

80. *on 15 Sep 2010 at 8:04 pm*⁸⁰ *Doubting Thomas*

David (msg. #72)

You said, "From the big bang onward to the development of life on this planet are said to have unfolded in the same order of phases/days as the Genesis account; if these events were witnessed from the position of standing where the earth was, when it happened."

I agree completely. Genesis 1:2 says, "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."

The story of creation is told from the viewpoint of the Spirit of God that was hovering over the face of the waters. The order that things would have appeared (to that Spirit) fits perfectly with our known understanding of how the planet evolved...

81. *on 16 Sep 2010 at 10:55 am*⁸¹ *Ray*

It seems to me that the doctrine of the Trinity is to many Christians as a golden calf (Ex 32:4) and that many a Trinitarian has decided that all Christians must bow to it.

Though I am not in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, nor have I decided that I will spend my life in it's defence, nor promote the teaching of it, nor disciple men by it, I believe that Jesus was both with God and in God from all eternity, before the creation of the world, did communicate with God the Father, was at that time God's Son, did create all things by God the Father, is the Word of God, did reign in Glory with God before he came to this earth, was in the world by the spirit of God, the spirit of wisdom, the holy spirit, found by at least a few men this way, later came into this world in the flesh by the holy spirit, being born of a virgin, taught the things of his kingdom, of heaven, of righteousness, of faith, of goodness, of virtue, of love, of kindness, of patience, of whatever it was that God sent him to teach and do, was crucified, was buried, was raised to life again by a bodily resurrection, did continue to be seen for a few dozens of days or so, and did ascend up where he was before.

I believe that a Christian can be a Christian without giving his life over to the doctrine of the Trinity as if it is the form he must adhere to, the style he must wear, or the model he must reproduce. If it is something he must do for acceptance by an institution on this earth, it seems to me that the kingdom of heaven has not yet come to that institution.

82. *on 17 Sep 2010 at 1:38 am*⁸² *David*

It is interesting to point out that in the Dead Sea Scrolls (I don't remember which volume or fragment at this time, but it was one of the books of Enoch) the figure of the Son of Man, believed to be the same depicted in Isaiah, is described as eternally existent in heaven with the Father and also born before the world was ever created.

83. *on 17 Sep 2010 at 2:35 am*⁸³ *RogCat*

I see a part of the Trinitarian - Unitarian conflict is that neither position appears to accept that Jesus IS a Man! He stated that he was a "Son of Man" - which should tell us that he IS a Man.

I contend that Jesus has NOT existed, forever, for it was well into the Creation - on the Sixth Day of the Creation - that God began to "create" Man. Jesus was the very first one of us whose creation into the IMAGE and into the LIKENESS of God was completed. The rest of us are still being created. Jesus was God's first born Son out of the WORD (PLAN) of God for the Creation.

Jesus was CREATED; he did not always exist. For God said, "Today, I have become your Father." Must I quote the verses?

84. *on 17 Sep 2010 at 4:43 am*⁸⁴ *Marc Taylor*

Why couldn't Acts 13:33 refer to Christ's resurrection?

85. *on 17 Sep 2010 at 4:55 am*⁸⁵ *Michael*

Marc writes-Why couldn't Acts 13:33 refer to Christ's resurrection?

Response... Yes.

86. *on 18 Sep 2010 at 1:07 am*⁸⁶ *RogCat*

Jesus became God's born son at his baptism. The phrase, "raising up" refers to the eventual birth of Jesus FROM through his descendants.

1 Chronicles 17:11-13 (NIV)

When your days are over and you go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever.

I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will never take my love away from him, as I took it away from your predecessor.

The point is, Jesus was CREATED — he BECAME God's firstborn Son. He was not always God's BORN Son.

As for the resurrection, Jesus raised himself up from the dead! It is common throughout the Scriptures, however, to attribute everything to God —— because nothing is done without God's approval. Technically, however, Jesus had the power to raise his dead body up from the grave.

John 2:18-22 (KJV)

Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

But he spake of the temple of his body.

When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

87. on 18 Sep 2010 at 2:15 am⁸⁷ David

Yes, I do also believe that the scriptures state quite plainly that Jesus was created. "Son of Man" can mean either "human" or "mortal". I also believe Jesus always existed within the plan of God. I too second that Jesus did not become the "Son of God" until his baptism by John. Jesus was not "pre-existent" or "eternally existent" in relation to time as we know it. He is human, he is Jewish. He was born some 2000 years ago, and did not exist in any other way, shape or form, other than in the mind of God.

88. on 18 Sep 2010 at 2:22 am⁸⁸ David

... silly me, did I really write "born before" in #82? That's not what I meant at all!

89. on 18 Sep 2010 at 9:12 am⁸⁹ Doubting Thomas

RogCat/David

I agree with both of you that Yeshua/Jesus was created and was not pre-existent in some form or another, other than being planned from the very beginning...

90. on 18 Sep 2010 at 2:12 pm⁹⁰ Doubting Thomas

David

I was just rereading your msg. #82, where you were talking about the Dead Sea scrolls saying that, "the figure of the Son of Man, believed to be the same as depicted in Isaiah, is described as eternally existent in heaven with the Father."

Then in msg. #87, you said, "Jesus was not 'pre-existent' or 'eternally existent' in relation to time as we know it. He is human, he is Jewish. He was born some 2000

years ago, and did not exist in any other way, shape or form, other than in the mind of God.”

What you say in msg. #82, about Yeshua/Jesus being “eternally existent with the Father” doesn’t seem to fit with what you are saying in Msg. *87. I am just wondering if you made another typo in msg. #82 other than the one about being “born before.”

BTW - I hope you are having a great Sabbath...

91. on 19 Sep 2010 at 4:16 am⁹¹ RogCat

Doubting Thomas,

FYI I am having a great Seventh-Day Sabbath according to God’s “Will.” I, for one, believe in keeping ALL of the Ten Commandments, for they represent the “WILL” of OUR Father. This is another subject, of course - - - but nice to know to further our fellowship.

92. on 13 Oct 2010 at 2:04 am⁹² Mark C.

The discussion on the Sabbath and the day Jesus died has been moved to the following more relevant thread:

<http://kingdomready.org/blog/2010/04/12/what-day-did-jesus-die/#comment-74267>

(Thanks, Robert. I tweaked the formatting a little to make it easier to read.)

93. on 13 Oct 2010 at 3:31 am⁹³ David

DT,

Yes I made a typo in Message #82 where I said that Jesus was “born before.” It is important to note that the Son of Man figure in Isaiah thought by some Jewish scholars to also refer to the nation of Israel or even mankind.

I do not believe Jesus did not exist (pre-human) other than in the plan or mind of God. He is a created being who is temporal. It’s a confusing subject in any way since with God there is no space or time.

In which case one could say that all things pre-existed, technically speaking. What necessarily defines a “thought” in the “mind” of God? A memory? An echo? A parallel or alternate reality? If one were to travel back in time, would the people of the present time cease to exist? Or would a different “branch” of life take place? This topic can get out of control rather quickly as it’s confusing. In this

case, it is truly possible. But for the sake of simplicity, I'm sure we are speaking of the timeline of which we can observe and comprehend.

I think the issue when dealing with the "pre-existence" of Jesus is a tricky one. I'm in the air with it. I think he could have existed, but it's beyond human comprehension and moving into the realm of metaphysics. It's a harmless issue alone with the answer almost a bit ambiguous, but it's an issue that Trinitarians have been using to reinforce their "co-equal/co-eternal" doctrine. Common sense and biblical passages show that Jesus came into play at a specific point in time.



2nd Rebuttal (4b)

September 12th, 2010 by Danny Dixon

This is the eighth post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



I think we all can see the lack of value in quoting scholarly sources without providing explanation for the meaning of the sources. Once a theological concept appears in a word it becomes the responsibility of the person using the word to define it clearly so that the reasoning behind the selected scholarly texts can be explained, so that the readers, particularly in a debate, can see the different points of view and argumentation used to establish singular points. Scholars often are appealed to as final authorities on a subject. They are not. Readers are finally responsible for what they choose to embrace. Let me illustrate.

I noted in Comment 6 to your Rebuttal 1b that Thayer, a lexicographer that Marc quotes frequently,

“held, particularly regarding Jesus as the Logos in the first few verses of John 1 that the Logos (the Word) “is expressly distinguished from the first cause” (J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977 reprint], p. 133).

And while H. Bietenhard has noted that the word *arche* may be used in the sense of “absolute beginning,” he says that the word can be understood to communicate that Jesus is the “first cause” of creation, citing Revelation 22:13 (where Jesus is called first and last) as a possible passage where the idea may be applied. He sets this idea apart as something different from the admittedly possible understanding as used in John 1:1 which he says “implies something before time, i.e. not a beginning within time, but an absolute beginning, which can be affirmed only of God, of when no temporal categories can be predicated.” Where the Word can be seen “in the strictest sense pre-existent before the world and so before time which begins with the world” (“Beginning” *_NIDNTT_I:166*).

The contrasting views of “absolute beginning” and of “first cause” as regards the creation of this world are both set forth as possible understandings of *arche* by the same author. I list this to illustrate that the concept of endless existence need not be the only way to understand what the Word was. There is no reference point as to how long the Logos was “with God,” nor is there a biblical outline of when he as a divine being was given life (Again, John 5:26; 6:57).

Marc charges that I am presenting “‘ citationless’ theological opinion/bias [that] will not allow the ‘first and last’ to mean what the lexicons define it as.” On the contrary when one looks at lexicons, take the Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker one, we find that the words *protos*, “first” and *eschatos*, “last” (and any others that we might choose) will give a

listing of the word in Greek, then, in italics list the simple meaning of the word in different contexts (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1979, pp. 725ff, 313ff). Theological conclusions then follow in non-italicized text. The authors of the lexicons do it governed by their bias. They classify the words as they see fit, they provide additional commentary to the italicized definitions as they deem appropriate based on their understanding and presuppositions.

Moises Silva in the introduction to his *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, Revised and Expanded Edition (1994), reminds the reader that there is a responsible way to use lexicons. Let me give a rather lengthy quotation, which defines lexicography, from his book:

Our goal is *not* to deduce the theology of the New Testament writers straight out of the words they use, nor even to map out semantic fields that in themselves may reflect theological structures. We have the relatively modest goal of determining the most accurate English equivalents to biblical words, of being able to decide, with as much certainty as possible, what a specific Greek or Hebrew word in a specific context actually means [Every] exegete must have sufficient involvement in that work to evaluate and assimilate the results of the “experts.” Similarly, all biblical interpreters need exposure to and experience in lexicographic method if they would use the linguistic data in a responsible way.

In a survey of biblical scholars and students conducted in the late 1960s, some respondents commented on the need for “a better understanding of the nature, use, and limitations of a lexicon” on the part of dictionary users . . . (pp. 31-32).

Silva’s book is rather technical, and on pages 176-177 he gives a list of six steps for determining the proper English equivalents of specific words in specific contexts. I hesitate to list them here, and I refer the more ambitious students of the word to get the book (Used copies start at about \$5.00 to \$20.00 for a new copy). What is *not on the list* is any sort of method of depending on the uncritical listing of definitions from a theological dictionary as if the *discussion* provided by the author of an article in it constituted definitions that should be accepted without question.

The majority of professional biblical scholars appear to be Trinitarian in bent. There are recognized biblical scholars who seem to have a Unitarian leaning. For nearly any definition that can be given as regards certain key terms and phrases in biblical studies that seem to support a Trinitarian perspective, *as we have seen*, there are Unitarian scholars who make comments that are opposite, sometimes within the same volume or within a few pages of a given article. Indeed, as I have demonstrated above, sometimes there can be acknowledgment of ambiguity with regard to the meaning of lexical terms within the same article by the same author within a paragraph of each other.

The Angel of Yahweh and Agency
And the Remaining Difficulty for Marc at Psalm 110:1

Marc's explanation of Jacob's interaction with the angel is not convincing even to other Trinitarians who see agency completely at play in Genesis 48:16. The authors of the note in the N.E.T. Bible write to that effect:

Jacob closely associates God with an angelic protective presence. This does not mean that Jacob viewed his God as a mere angel, but it does suggest that he was aware of an angelic presence sent by God to protect him. Here he so closely associates the two that they become virtually indistinguishable. In this culture messengers typically carried the authority of the one who sent them and could even be addressed as such. Perhaps Jacob thought that the divine blessing would be mediated through this angelic messenger (<http://net.bible.org/verse.php?book=Gen&chapter=48&verse=16>).

This is not to neglect Judges 6:13, which uses the address *Adoni*. God's angel (6:20), also called Yahweh's angel (6:12) speaks to Gideon *about* Yahweh. In addition consider the article by John M. Wilson which lists a number of similar passages and explains why this angel should not be seen as being God. He writes:

A study of these passages shows that while the angel and Jehovah are at times distinguished from each other, they are with equal frequency, and in the same passages, merged into each other . . . It is obvious that these apparitions cannot be the Almighty Himself, whom no man hath seen [John 1:18, Dixon note], or can see. In seeking the explanation, special attention should be paid . . . two passages . . . In Exodus 23:20ff God promises to send an angel before his people to lead them to the promised land; they are commanded to obey him and not to provoke him "for he will not pardon your transgression: for my name is in him." Thus the angel can forgive sin, which only God can do, because God's name, i.e. His character, and thus His authority, are in the angel. Further in the passage Exodus 32:34 - 33:17 Moses intercedes for the people after their first breach of the covenant; God responds by promising, "Behold, Mine angel shall go before thee"; and immediately after God says, "I will not go up in the midst of thee." In answer to further pleading, God says, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Here a clear distinction is made between an ordinary angel, and the angel who carries with him God's presence (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*: 1:133-134).

In trying to identify the identity of the Angel, Wilson suggests that the angel might be a "temporary preincarnation of the second person of the Trinity." But he acknowledges honestly and objectively that this and other suggestions that he gives fall into the category of "conjecture." That there is no indication of *Adoni* referring to Yahweh himself is reasonably argued, and Marc still has to explain how Yahweh speaks directly to Adoni in Psalm 110:1.

2 Responses to "2nd Rebuttal (4b)"

1. on 12 Sep 2010 at 9:46 am Sean

Sorry about the delay in posting this. Danny did have it in on time (yesterday) but I was not able to post it.

2. *on 19 Sep 2010 at 11:59 pm2 Marc Taylor*

Danny,

How can it be a case of agency when an agent is a substitute? Jacob already entered into God's presence.

You wrote: The majority of professional biblical scholars appear to be Trinitarian in bent. There are recognized biblical scholars who seem to have a Unitarian leaning.

Why do you think a majority of professional biblical scholars are of a Trinitarian bent? Are they all missing something that you see?

Please list some biblical scholars that have Unitarian leanings.

5 Questions for Marc to Answer (5a)

September 14th, 2010 by Danny Dixon

This is the ninth post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



Marc:

This new phase of the discussion is upon us. I hope my questions are understandable. And I hope you can respond in a thorough way as may be necessary. Please note that we do not have full space to respond to the questions we leave for one another unless we do so either in the Comments or in our closing statements (We should have thought about that when we were making the rules for the discussion!)

Authority and Omnipotence

In comment 51 after your 2nd Trinitarian Constructive (4a), you argued:

All authority means all power - omnipotent = Almighty The Father gave it to Him. If anyone has all power for any period of time then that necessitates they are Almighty.

Question #1: Please explain how Jesus was still the Almighty *before* the Father gave him “all authority” and “all power” that *made* him omnipotent? You seem to leave the impression that a person *can become* “Almighty.”

Adam is God’s Son

Question #2: In Luke 3:38, Luke says that Adam is “the son of God.” How is this to be explained?

”You shall *know* the truth? Dealing with Scholars

Marc, In your Second Rebuttal 3b you wrote:

Comment 20: “Scholars versus scholars is part of my point in John 1:1 and concerning “only-begotten.” As one asserting this assertion is nowhere near airtight at all.

You seem to have indicated here that when, in discussion, one scholar’s opinion is pitted against another scholar, their assertions are “nowhere near airtight at all.” You and I have both cited scholars of equal stature who have held opposite opinions representing Trinitarian and Unitarian positions respectively, so that we might find something “airtight at all” in this discussion.

Question #3: Please explain your process of determining how one is to decide that one supporting scholar's position should be considered more airtight than another.

Jesus Has a God

In your Second Rebuttal 3b you cite Reicke in the *Theological Dictionary of New Testament Theology* who wrote: "A new situation is brought into being with the crucifixion and resurrection. The Chosen One seizes the full power which He had from the beginning of the world, Mt. 28:18: 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth'" (5:895, pas - Reicke).

Also in comment #11 of that same Rebuttal 3b you state that "Jesus has a God because he is also a man." In Revelation 3:12, the resurrected Christ says, "I will make the one who overcomes a pillar in the temple of *my God*"; "and I will write the name of *my God* and the name of the city of *my God*—the New Jerusalem which comes down from heaven from *my God*—and my new name upon him" (emphasis added throughout).

Question #4: What is it now that makes the resurrected glorified-again Jesus have a God?

***Theos* in John 1:1b and John 1:1c**

In comment 3 under your Rebuttal 1b I referenced Joseph Henry Thayer, whose lexicon of New Testament Greek to which you have often referred. I noted that Thayer held, particularly regarding Jesus as the Logos in the first few verses of John, the Logos (the Word)—is expressly distinguished from the first causel (J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977 reprint], p. 133). In other words, the Word is not God the first cause of everything.

Also in comment 19 under your 2nd Trinitarian Constructive (4a), you wrote that "'God' can simply denote the 'Father.' It is His primary (although not His exclusive) appellation."

Question #5: In John 1:1 does either designation of "God" simply denote the Father, and if so, please designate that and any other meanings of God in the verse.

Please feel free to elaborate on as many of the above questions as you wish in your response.

Fraternally,
Danny André Dixon

5 Answers for Danny (5b)

September 18th, 2010 by Marc Taylor

This is the tenth post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



1. TDNT: Elsewhere, however, it is said of the Redeemer during His earthly life that He has laid aside His power and appeared in lowliness and humility, Mt. 11:29; 12:18-21; 2 C. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-8 -> kenow 3, 661, 13-28, cf. the temptation of Jesus, Mt. 4:8 f. par. Lk. 4:5 f. Thus, when the full power of Jesus is occasionally mentioned during the time of His humiliation, it is merely a proleptic fact.

A new situation is brought into being with the crucifixion and resurrection.

The Chosen One seizes the full power which He had from the beginning of the world, Mt. 28:18: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (5:895, pas - Reicke).

The Lord Jesus was, is and will always be omnipotent. He chose not to always use His "full power" (omnipotence) during His earthly life. Refusal to employ ability does not necessitate inability.

2. TDNT: God is the Father of all but this does not mean that all men are His sons. There are hints of this only in Lk. 3:38; Ac. 17:28, and both these passages have the creation in view, not a mythical or mystical begetting or the presence of a divine spark in man (8:389-390, hios - Schweizer).

Adam was the son of God because he "was not born of human parents but was still a full man and not a demi-god" (TDNT 8:382, *ibid.*).

Adam is the son of God by creation (cf. Genesis 2).

3. I previously wrote that scholars versus scholars is part of my point in John 1:1 and concerning 'only-begotten.' As one asserting this assertion is nowhere near airtight at all. I don't mean that all assertions have to be airtight but your citations concerning John 1:1 and "only-begotten" are nowhere near it. In fact, a vast majority are actually against what you are asserting. To employ passages and the arguments that go along with them and insist that one is correct when such a large majority of scholars disagree is unwise.

4. The resurrected glorified again Jesus has a God because he is still a man and he will always be a man (1 Timothy 2:5; cf. Colossians 2:9). This in no way detracts from His Deity.

a. Mounce: Jesus is called *anthrōpos* to designate his humanity apart from his divinity, as in 1 Tim. 2:5, “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” Not only does this refer to Jesus Christ as a specific man, but it also places emphasis on his humanity (Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Man, page 438).

b. TDNT: Christ is obviously not called man to rule out His deity, or in opposition to Docetic inclinations, or as ideal man or member of the one party, but to show that He belongs to all men without distinction (4:619; footnote #81, *mesites* - Oepke).

c. Vine: one who mediates between two parties with a view to producing peace, as in 1 Tim. 2:5, though more than mere mediatorship is in view, for the salvation of men necessitated that the Mediator should Himself possess the nature and attributes of Him towards whom He acts, and should likewise participate in the nature of those for whom He acts (sin apart); only by being possessed both of Deity and humanity could He comprehend the claims of the one and the needs of the other; further, the claims and the needs could be met only by One who, Himself being proved sinless, would offer Himself an expiatory sacrifice on behalf of men (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Mediator, pages 726-727).

d. As J.L. Williams so aptly wrote, “For Christ to be a bridge between man and God, He must, like a physical bridge, be firmly established on both shores. Otherwise the chasm that separated man from God would not be bridged. We would have no mediator. And we would still be lost in our sins.” (Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions, John Ankerberg and John Weldon; Harvest House Publishers, c. 1999, page 602, footnote #2, citing ‘Victor Paul Wierwille and The Way International’ by J.L. Williams, page 59).

5. The first use of “God” in John 1:1 refers to the Father while the second time “God” appears it refers to the Lord Jesus.

a. Louw and Nida: In Jn. 1.1, ‘the Word was God,’ the meaning of *theos* may be described on the basis that all the componential features of *theos* are applied to the referent *logos*, which is in turn identified with ‘Christ.’ This is not to be interpreted as indicating that the two referents are identical (which was, of course, the position of those who maintained the so-called *patropassian* heresy), but that the distinctive features of *theos* are also fully applicable to another referent, namely, the *logos* or Christ; that is to say, it is legitimate to interpret Jn. 1.1 as ‘the Word was God’ but not as ‘God was the Word’ (Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains, 12.1, *theos*, page 137).

b. On page 278 of “Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation” Moises Silva wrote: proponents of some cults are fond of pointing out that the last reference to God in John 1:1 does not include the definite article and so should be translated “a god” or “divine.” Someone with little or no knowledge of Greek could easily be persuaded by this

argument. A reasonably good understanding of predicate clauses in Greek, however, is all one needs to demonstrate that the argument has no foundation whatever (the article that accompanies the predicate noun is routinely dropped to distinguish the predicate from the subject of the clause - besides, there are numerous and indisputable references to God, as in verses 6, 13, and 18 of the same chapter, that do not include the article).

Earlier on page 215 Silva wrote:

Just as God was personally present in the creation of the world, so did he become personally present in the accomplishment of redemption. It was not simply a poetic strain that led the apostle John to begin his gospel by describing Jesus as the Word. That Word was there at the beginning of creation with God - indeed, that Word was God himself, and all things were created by him (John 1:1-3; cf. also Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2-3).

c. TDNT: The lack of article, which is grammatically necessary in 1:1, is striking here, and reminds us of Philonic usage. The Logos who became flesh and revealed the invisible God was a divine being, God by nature. The man born blind has some sense of this when, after his healing, he falls down in believing adoration before Christ, who addresses him with the divine "I" (Jn. 9:38f.). The final veil is removed, however, when the Risen Lord discloses Himself to Thomas, and the astonished disciple exclaims: *ho kurios mou kai ho theos mou* (Jn. 20:28). In Jn. 1:1 we have Christology: He is God in Himself. Here we have the revelation of Christ: He is God for believers (3:105-106, *theos* - Stauffer)

d. TDNT: *Theos* is not restricted to the God and Father of Jesus Christ. It is also used occasionally of Jesus Himself (3:92, *theos*; footnote #140 reads, "Jn. 1:1; 20:28 etc." - Kuhm).

e. TDNT: Only He who is beyond all human comparison and has always been most intimate with the Father can declare the Father, 1:1, 18. The *ho wn eis ton kolpon tou patros* does not refer to a single stage but to what has always been and always is (5:998, *pater* - Schrenk).

123 Responses to "5 Answers for Danny (5b)"

1. *on 18 Sep 2010 at 10:32 am* robert

Mark

How do you deal with this, this leaves out God the Son as Good or equal.
Seems the early church fathers didnt have the corrupted text of the trinitarian church

Matthew 19.17 /Mark 10.18/Luke 18.19

One very early Church Father is Justin. In his Dialogue 101.2 (probably from the 140s or 150s) , we read "One is good, my Father in the heavens." This very early quotation is not what we read in the Bible today.

Perhaps he was just working from memory, or did he have a manuscript which differed from today's Bibles?

EPHREM: Commentary on the Diatessaron, XV.9, in both the original Syriac and the Armenian (2 manuscripts) reads: "One is good, the/my Father who [is] in the heaven."

Ephrem died in 373, and the Syriac manuscript of the Commentary is fifth century. And Tatian, of course, composed the Diatessaron (the gospel harmony upon which Ephrem was commenting) about 172, on the basis of the gospel texts current then. And this citation agrees precisely with Justin's, allowing for the differences in Syriac and Greek. We now have two independent sources which show that the 2nd-century manuscripts of this Gospel verse differ from what is read today.

IRENÆUS: Haer. V.7.25 (pre-185): "One is good, the/my Father in the heavens."

Another second-century source confirming the 'wrong' version of Matthew 19:17.

HIPPOLYTUS: Haer. V.7.25 (pre-222): "One is good, the/my Father in the heavens."

Another early Christian Father has the 'wrong' version.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA: Strom. V.10.63 (composed c. 207): "One is good, the/my Father."

At least Clement drops the 'in the heaven' phrase.

PSEUDO-CLEMENTINE HOMILIES: XVI.3.4 about 260 AD. "For one is good, the/my Father in the heavens."

Another early Church Father disagrees with the 'correct' version of the Bible.

VETUS LATINA MS e (apud Matthew, 5th cent.): "Unus est bonus, pater."

This is the second most ancient manuscript and it also has 'Father'

VETUS LATINA MS d (apud Luke, 5th century.): "Nemo bonus nisi unus Deus pater."

'Father' again.

I wonder why this verse was changed. Bibles of today read that no one is good except God alone. This is fine for Christians who believe that Jesus is God. But if the manuscripts read that no one is good except the Father, then there would be trouble for Trinitarians, who believe Jesus is God, but not God the Father. So it was changed.

2. *on 18 Sep 2010 at 10:33 am* 2 robert

Sorry i meant Marc

3. *on 18 Sep 2010 at 6:13 pm* 3 Marc Taylor

Robert,

I never studied the manuscript evidence for this passage.

4. *on 18 Sep 2010 at 6:45 pm* 4 robert

Marc

Maybe you should do some research on one of the earliest set of MSS which have their reading quoted by church fathers of the the first centuries after christianity started.

The codex bezae matches most of their quotes, where the readings which you use were unknown to them.

Kinda hard to claim equality of the trinity if Jesus claims it doesnt exist.

I thought your having this debate you atleast read everything pertaining to the bible.

I myself read everything i can that pertains to christianity

5. *on 18 Sep 2010 at 7:01 pm5 Doubting Thomas*

Robert

That is a very interesting point that you make in msg. #1 above...

6. *on 18 Sep 2010 at 8:26 pm6 Marc Taylor*

When such an overwhelming amount of manuscripts don't contain it and no English Bible version has it that I know of it is unwise to make an assertion and insist that it is fact.

Read "everything" pertainin to the Bible? Please tell me anybody wo has read everything pertaining to the Bible.

7. *on 18 Sep 2010 at 8:48 pm7 robert*

Marc

There are billions of the KJV versions but that doesnt make it authoritive because they are just copies of copies. So your claim that there are many more MSS that support your view is flawed by the point that they are just copies of copies. What makes the codex bezae more creditable is the fact that it is quoted from long before any of the MSS ever existed.

So since the catholic church was in power during most of MSS being copied they had the choice of what got copied.

If the opposing factors would of had power we might find 5000 copies of the Codex Bezae.

Early witnesses not the amount of copies is what true truth seeker would require. Dont you agree?

8. *on 19 Sep 2010 at 3:16 am8 Marc Taylor*

Robert,

Please list the English Bibles that have it or that at least have it as a footnote. A few (rather an extremely few) manuscripts is suspect.

Furthermore, even if Jesus did say that the Father alone is good then that means

Christ is deficient of this goodness. Please list the way/ways in which Christ is lacking in absolute goodness.

9. on 19 Sep 2010 at 11:28 am⁹ robert

Marc

Just how is providing english versions going to help when none of them existed when the early church fathers quoted this verse some 1800 years ago.

What evidence i gave you was more ancient then the MSS that our english bibles are translated from and shows that they didnt even know about the reading with God instead of Father.

But you answered my question on how you would deal with it and it fits how most trinitarians would deal with it and as usual it doesnt make any sense

10. on 19 Sep 2010 at 4:21 pm¹⁰ Danny Dixon

Regarding Answer to Question 1

My first questions was: **Please explain how Jesus was still the Almighty before the Father gave him “all authority” and “all power” that made him omnipotent?**

Marc’s position, unwittingly revealed in his response to this question, has left the impression that Jesus could *become* “Almighty” after a time when he was not God. Note the definitions he leaves for us: “All authority means all power - omnipotent = Almighty The Father gave it to Him. If anyone has all power for any period of time then that necessitates they are Almighty.” This comment clearly implies that there was a time when Jesus did NOT have all power; a time that he was therefore NOT omnipotent; and was therefore NOT Almighty (since he capitalizes it, I take it to mean “The Almighty”).

This was to be expected since Marc has had difficulty in understanding the meaning of the word “to give” anyway, as was clearly seen in the beginning of the debate when he was not able to adequately explain Jesus’ explanation that the Father “gave to the Son also to have life in himself” (See John 5:26), and Marc’s comment in presentation. The same problem that Marc has in believing that there could be such a thing as an eternal begetting. Note Marc’s admission in his Rebuttal 1b, where he gave reference to an online commentary in which Barnes tries to explain the phrase “hath life” of John 5:26. Marc relied on it as an adequate response to my question about the *origin* of Jesus’ life from the source the Father who was the agent of his (Jesus’) begettal. It is certainly true that the context of John 5:22-26 mentions several things:

1. God’s gift of mediating judgment to the Son (v. 22).

2. The will of the Father that since he was honored his Son also should be honored (v.23).
3. The status of having eternal life for those who believe in Jesus who was sent by the Father (v. 24).
4. The explanation that a time will come when the dead will hear the Son's voice and live to be judged (vss. 25, 27).
5. The declaration that the Father, as the self-existent origin of life, is thus the cause of the Son having life in himself being one who "gave to the Son to have life in himself" (v. 26).

Yet Barnes, and so Marc, dodge the clear indications of the passage that there was a time when the Son did not have life and then came to have it as a result of the Father's gift. Barnes did so, and Marc joined suit by ignoring the fact that the partial phrase "hath life" of verse 26 has nothing to do with the aspects of Jesus' mediation brought out in verse 22.

Marc admitted that he believed in the Trinitarian doctrine of the "eternal begettall" of the Son (in comment 5 after 3a: "Yes I believe in the eternal begottenness of the Son of God" even though begettall is a one-time act requiring the Trinitarian to redefine common language and make ideas and concepts mean something that they do not in regular conversation. He must do so with the word "to give" as well as is clearly implied in his answer to question 1 when, after essentially saying that, the status of being Almighty was something that was "given" to Jesus.

My question merely asked him to explain what Jesus was before he was given that status. Marc's answer *begins after the focus of my question* when he talks about Jesus laying aside his prerogatives of divinity that he had before coming to the earth. I've already granted Jesus' pre-human existence and kenotic humbling to come to the earth as a man.

The point of my question clearly has to do with how Jesus ever came to be Almighty in the first place, especially since Marc said that God *Jesus that status. Marc is a moving target. He has to contradict himself when he affirms that Jesus "laid aside His power and appeared in lowliness and humility" (what I happen to believe), while he really believes, in contradiction, that he was always able to exercise his omnipotence. Note that he says, "The Lord Jesus was, is and will always be omnipotent. He chose not to always use His 'full power' (omnipotence) during His earthly life. Refusal to employ ability does not necessitate inability" (Marc's Answers 5b).*

Is it, then, the prerogative or choice of the God-man Jesus not to exercise his power or did he really lay it aside and come to the earth, not as a God-man, but as a man entirely? He does return to the language stressing Christ's decision not

to exercise his privileges of inherent omnipotence. He says, in answer to a question: “You assume the power wasn’t inherently Christ’s. Why couldn’t Christ willingly choose not to employ it? Again, any Being that has “all-power” (omnipotent, i.e., Almighty) is by definition ‘God’” (Comment 19 after Constructive 4a).

Even so, Marc shifts horses embracing the opinion of that Jesus did NOT have his prerogatives of divinity on the earth, but that they were, on the other hand *anticipated*. He quotes Reicke in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* who says, “Thus, when the full power of Jesus is occasionally mentioned during the time of His humiliation, it is merely a proleptic fact,” and that it is only after Jesus is crucified and raised that “a new situation” really occurs and Jesus for the first time since leaving heaven becomes the Almighty (Answers 5b).

It is difficult, then, to see if Marc even answered the question. Is he saying that that Jesus was a center of consciousness in a man, and as only a man, was a separate person from the Father who *gave* him all authority right before the ascension (Matthew 28:18)? Or does Jesus *finally* grab hold, seize back his authority after the crucifixion and resurrection since he only had an anticipatory, a proleptic, hope while on the earth?

11. on 19 Sep 2010 at 5:21 pm¹¹ Danny Dixon

Regarding Answer to Question #2

My second question for Marc was, **In Luke 3:38, Luke says that Adam is “the son of God.” How is this to be explained?**

When Marc speaks of Adam being a special son of God “by Creation,” he opens the door to an understanding of biblical language that is very revealing. Marc tells us that he believes in “the eternal begottenness of the Son of God” (3a Comment 5). In so doing he demonstrates how necessary it is to depart from normal language in the Scriptures written to human beings in order to create doctrines that are beyond normal understanding.

That there are secret things about God that one cannot understand does not preclude the fact that there are things about him that are in fact revealed (Deuteronomy 29:29). Adam becomes a son of God because he comes into existence through the agency of God in a creative act. Jesus is eternally begotten, we are told, when a simpler explanation of the information in evidence would suffice.

There is no mystery in saying that God begat Jesus—that the fact occurred. The human side of it is simple enough, Gabriel explains that Jesus’ arrival as a human being is precisely because the Holy Spirit causes Mary to become impregnated

(Luke 1:35). Jesus explains his begetting, his beginning of life, his becoming a Son, as God's action (John 5:26).

12. on 19 Sep 2010 at 6:26 pm¹² Danny Dixon

Regarding Answer to Question #3

I asked, **Please explain your process of determining how one is to decide that one supporting scholar's position should be considered more airtight than another.**

While reading Marc's answer to question #3 I could not help but become reflective. Bottom line, Marc has told us simply that with regard to these serious matters with which we are dealing, "might makes right." If the majority of scholars say a thing is true, then it simply *is* true. This is to say nothing regarding the numerous times that I and several on this forum have noticed that Marc pits scholars even against themselves.

It is almost as if he has determined the doctrine to be true, then goes to find language in some scholarly work that backs his dispositions. It's been demonstrated from time to time that the works themselves often have contradictory conclusions as scholars who are contributors to the articles therein differ among themselves. And sometimes the same contributor will admit, even regarding Trinitarian prerogatives, that differing opinions—some aspects of which support a more Unitarian point of view—ought to be considered as probable as this or that Trinitarian idea.

I had hoped that we would have been able to see if Mark had an objective set of standards by which we could see that when I cite scholars from the same sources that he does, and when I cite scholars who are the same ones that he cites, and when some of my cites are not Trinitarian—I had hoped that he could help us to measure which is to be preferred. And now, all he has given us is essentially to say that if the majority of scholars have it one way, that is *the* way the thing should be understood.

And yet I cannot help but think of what Jesus said about the propensity of people to just go with the large crowd. What does he say? "Enter in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate and small is the road, that leads to life and few are they that find it" (Matthew 7:13-14).

I wouldn't, on the other hand, want to leave the impression that just because a perspective is small that following such a path is correct. Examples can be found where the stubborn few perished because they chose to remain in dwellings built aside a Mt. St. Helens ready to explode or in beachhouses doomed to be blown away by an approaching Florida hurricane. One would almost get the impression

that Trinitarian doctrine was the clear perspective throughout church history; that everyone agreed upon it; and that only the idiot naysayers held to any other perspective. Such is not the case. Even a glancing scan through Richard E. Rubenstein's historical tome *When Jesus Became God: The Struggle to Define Christianity during the Last Days of Rome* reveals that prior to the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. opinions all across the Roman Empire varied. It took 150 years to come up with nicely turned phrases to describe the Trinitarian doctrine the scholars felt would represent the latter perspectives embraced. Consider these facts about the twists and turns of opinion the doctrine of the Trinity had to embark, before being embraced by the Christian Majority today:

328—Constantine recalled Arius from exile in Illyria.

335—Constantine sides with Arius and exiles Athanasius to Trier.

336—The eastern bishops met at Constantinople with the emperor present in a fourth council since Arius returned from exile to declare his theology orthodox.

337—The new Emperor Constantius orders the return of Athanasius to Alexandria where he had been bishop.

339—Athanasius flees Alexandria having learned he is about to be expelled as a heretic.

341—In two councils held in Antioch at that time, the First, Second and Third Arian Confessions are written attempting to create a formal doctrine of faith to oppose the Nicene Creed.

343—At the Council of Sardica, eastern bishops demand the removal of Athanasius

346—Athanasius is restored to Alexandria.

351—A council is held at Aries during autumn that is directed against Athanasius.

355—A council is held in Milan which again condemns Athanasius.

356—Athanasius is deposed on February 8 and begins his third exile.

357—The Third Council of Sirmium is convened where it is agreed that the Father is greater than His subordinate son.

359—The council of Seleucia affirms that Christ is like the father without specifying how the Son is like the Father.

361—A council is held in Antioch to affirm Arius' position.

380—Emperor Theodosius the Great declares Christianity the official state religion of the Empire.

381—The First Council of Constantinople reviews the controversy since Nicea, re-evaluates and accepts the Nicene Creed adding clauses on the Holy Spirit and other matters.

Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* records the confused, but honest, statement by Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, who wrote:

Every year, nay, every moon we make new creeds to describe invisible mysteries. We repent of what we have done, we defend those who repent, we anathematize those whom we defended. We condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others; and reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin (cited in G.S. Deuble, *They Never Told me This in Church* (2006) Atlanta, GA: Restoration Fellowship, pp. 31-33.

13. on 19 Sep 2010 at 7:07 pm¹³ Marc Taylor

Robert,
Yeah it doesn't make any sense because you just don't ewnat to answer the question.

14. on 19 Sep 2010 at 7:20 pm¹⁴ robert

Marc
thats not what makes no sense.the way you deal with my question is what doesnt make any sense but knew it would be somewhat of that type of answer
There is no answer to that question is why it was not answered.
Thats like asking if a fish gets cold when its flying in the clouds

15. on 19 Sep 2010 at 7:34 pm¹⁵ Marc Taylor

Robert,
Your response doesn't make sense. Since you are clinging to the notion that only the Father is good that necessitates the Lord Jesus comes short of that goodness in some way/s. You asserted it so explain how.

16. on 19 Sep 2010 at 7:39 pm¹⁶ Marc Taylor

Danny,
You regurgitate the same argumenst tha have already been dealt with by me.
Refusal to employ ability does not necessitate lack of ability.
Also you are the one asserting but when a vast majority don't see it your way the minority still wins. In fact, when they are all against you you throw out the notion that words can't be fully defined by citing Moises. Not only do you somehow

accept his words and thus how he defines them but he even refutes you concerning John 1:1 and how *latreuw* is used in the New Testament.

17. *on 19 Sep 2010 at 8:55 pm*¹⁷ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc

You said, “Since you are clinging to the notion that only the Father is good that necessitates the Lord Jesus comes short of that goodness is some way/s. You asserted it so explain how.”

I think Yeshua/Jesus is saying that any goodness that he does have comes from (originates from) the Father. Just like any goodness that we have comes from (originates from) OUR Father in heaven. ALL that is good comes from or originates from the Father/OUR Father.

At least that’s the way I see it anywaze...

18. *on 19 Sep 2010 at 9:06 pm*¹⁸ *Marc Taylor*

DT,

But people and creatures are not absolutely good. Christ is equally so as the Father.

1. Mounce: Christ is called holy in the same sense of God (Rev. 3:7; cf. 1 Jn. 2:20) (Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Holy, page 338).

2. TDNT: Similarly in Revelation Christ as *ho hagios kai ho alethinos* (3:7) bears the same predicates as God Himself (6:10). Thus in all the passages adduced *hagiosnis* used to describe the deity of Christ (1:102, *hagios* - Procksch).

19. *on 19 Sep 2010 at 9:18 pm*¹⁹ *Danny Dixon*

Re 16

Marc,

I just don’t think you’ve dealt with the arguments very well. You seem to have a presupposition that it is absolutely impossible to see things from a non-Trinitarian point of view and then hunt for scholars who specifically say words that would agree with you. You quote Thayer a lot, for instance, and he doesn’t agree with you on Jesus being first cause.

I think my major observation is that you repeat what scholars say without caring much about how they came to their conclusions.

Moise Silva talks about responsible use of a lexicon. His point in chapter six is that one doesn't define a word simply by looking at the theological commentary that is present along with the definitions which are usually in italics.

Silva doesn't refute me; he cites Jobe who has a different opinion than I do. That is not the same thing as a refutation. I am trying to get you to see that when people familiar with their own language use it in ways we are not used to, it is best that we try to understand WHY they would use language in that way. It does no good to just cite a quote and say it is good enough as a conclusion.

Karen Jobes wrote the Appendix in the second edition of Moises Silva's book, *Biblical Words and their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics* entitled, "Distinguishing the Meaning of Greek Verbs in the Semantic Domain for Worship" (pp. 201-211). It would have been helpful if, in the excellent article that she wrote outlining what it meant to worship God (in the sense of *latreuo*), she had discussed the concept of *shaliach*)—an "intermediary." Then there would have been some balance as to how you understand what she was saying. Greg Stafford explains this, perhaps, a little better than I did in my first discussion of the article by D. Steenburg ("The Worship of Adam and Christ as the Image of God" in my Rebuttal 2b). Referencing Jobes' discussion about *latreuo*) and summarizing thoughts in Steenburg's article he writes:

It is, however, possible to use *latreuo*) for someone other than God but only in furtherance of the worship of the "one God" . . . [He cites the section from a Christian portion of *The Sibylline Oracles* which uses the word *morphe* and continues explaining how] we read that all things in the world "serve" (form of *latreuo*) Adam because he is made in the *morphe* of God . . . This use of *morphe* may have to do with an image Adam was given that permitted "worship" of him similar to how the Son of God is the "image" and "imprint" of God (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3), and how as such he can be worshipped in "fulfillment of God's victory over idolatry" . . . It is also clear that this "worship" is in both cases "at God's bidding" as with Hebrews 1:6 (quotations refer to the Steenburg article, pp. 97, 100, 101) (Greg Stafford, "Jah's 'Firstborn.'" *Jehovah's Witnesses Defended*, Third Edition. [Murrieta, California: Elihu Books, 2009], p. 367, footnote 7.

Notice, Marc, that there is not just a scholar cited, but an argument is made. This is not something that you do typically. Here is the argument laid out:

1. *Latreuo* is used in "Christian" literature, namely *The Sibylline Oracles*, to indicate worship to God or to one whom God has specifically designated as being worthy of worship.
2. Additionally, *latreuo* is properly used of man if the further promotion of worship of God is at issue as opposed to idolatry.

3. Such usage is made of Adam in a literary context.
4. Such usage is made of Christ in a biblical context (Revelation 22:13).

K.H. Jobes, in her article in Moises Silva's book doesn't even address this aspect of agency. Neither do you. Rather the concept is rejected outright simply by providing, in a bullying manner, a quote by a scholar with a Trinitarian bias who makes no argument: "The incarnation of the Word thus does not mean Jesus as the eschatological ambassador, in whom God is present and acting; it signifies the presence of God himself in the flesh" (B. Klappart, *New New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, "Word" Vol 3:1117. See your reference to it in 2nd Rebuttal 3b).

Silva quotes J. H. Barr in *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (p. 222) regarding the use of the word *ho logos*, pointing out that the definite article there specializes the use of the word in that context. The quote, which I will give in full, and which I am guessing you might be referring to, does not make an argument:

The use of *ho logos* with the article in the very special case of John 1 is really a special meaning which cannot be mingled indiscriminately with other cases simply because they also contain the word *logos*. In other words a simple syntactic relation like the adding of the definite article and the absence of other qualification can establish a different semantic field just as well as the transition to another word can.

One thing I do want to note is that Barr has pointed out the significance of John 1 as a specialized passage, and that the use of definite articles with words and other relations make it a very important passage with possible specialized vocabulary. Barr doesn't say anything that impacts our debate, but we do get a signal flag in the quotation that should give us pause before making simple conclusions. It is important to examine the context carefully.

It will not be responsible to just dismiss this passage (John 1:1ff) casually. Other than this particular quotation, I didn't find any other reference to John 1 in the index which impacts our discussion. So your statement that Silva disagrees with me seems to be incorrect. I grant that you may have in mind a passage in his book that I didn't see in my perusal of the text, and I will respond if you will make more than a general statement that he disagrees with me.

At any rate, how do you deal with the *reasoned argument* regarding *latreuo* made by Steenburg and Stafford?

20. on 19 Sep 2010 at 9:45 pm20 Marc Taylor

Danny,

You reject what either most or all of the scholar say so it really isn't difficult at all

to go “hunting” for them. Thayer is a mixed bag so your appealing to him as it relates to “first cause” doesn’t help your cause. He defines theotes as, “the state of being God” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, theotes, page 288).

And under “theos” on page 287, he writes, “the matter is still in dispute among theologians” as to whether or not Christ is called God in John 20:28 but then he informs us that “after his resurrection Jesus is addressed by the title ho kurios mou kai ho theos mou, Jn. xx. 28” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, kurios, page 366). The noted linguist Professor Grimm wrote concerning proseuxee that it “is a word of sacred character, being limited to prayer to God” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, deesis, page 126) and yet you apply it to the Lord Jesus.

—
The very same book that you appeal to by Silva does refute you in regards to the use of latreuw. By the way he never made an editor’s comment (like Brown does in the NIDNTT) to either clarify or disagree with what is written in his book.

—
There are times when an argument does not need to be made because the meaning of the word is just self-explanatory. For example, when the Thayer says that the Lord of lords refers to the Supreme Lord and supreme is defined as in “highest” does one really need to define “highest”?

—
Latruew: Do you know that an is does not necessitate an ought?

—
In terms of agency on the very same page of the NIDNTT that you quoted refers to David but David was not physically there. Jacob already entered into the presence of God. That is not agency at all. An agent is a substitute. No substitute is needed in God’s presence. It doesn’t make sense to be appealing to God then suddenly stop and direct your request to a limited created being.

21. on 19 Sep 2010 at 9:58 pm²¹ Marc Taylor

In regards to Stafford he teaches that latreuw can be rendered to someone else other than God only in furtherance of the worship of the one God. This can be done because Adam was made in God’s image?

Since every person is made in God’s image are they worthy of latreuw? Why couldn’t a person “claim” that it is helping them in the furtherance of the worship of the one God?

22. on 19 Sep 2010 at 10:05 pm²² robert

“I think Yeshua/Jesus is saying that any goodness that he does have comes from (originates from) the Father. Just like any goodness that we have comes from (originates from) OUR Father in heaven. ALL that is good comes from or originates from the Father/OUR Father.”

Thomas

Very good answer, thanks

I wasn't going to bother because Marc wasn't going to accept even the most common sensual answer like yours

23. on 19 Sep 2010 at 11:30 pm²³ Marc Taylor

Robert,

DT wrote "Just like any goodness we have comes from the Father"....but we are not holy in the same sense as God. Robert must have skipped over that part in all of his reading.

24. on 19 Sep 2010 at 11:37 pm²⁴ robert

"DT wrote "Just like any goodness we have comes from the Father"....but we are not holy in the same sense as God. Robert must have skipped over that part in all of his reading."

Marc

Nor is anything or anyone holy in the same sense as God Yahweh, that you must of skipped over in all your reading.

25. on 19 Sep 2010 at 11:46 pm²⁵ Marc Taylor

See the citations in my response (#18). Hopefully this time you won't skip over it.

26. on 19 Sep 2010 at 11:51 pm²⁶ Danny Dixon

Marc:

I see that your reference to Silva is from another book, NOT *Biblical Words and Their Meaning*, which I do not have, but will try to get post haste before I comment on it.

I think that I may, likely, not be able to afford this \$65 book before the debate is officially over. It is something that I see I should have in my library. However, I do think I will be able to comment on what Silva has said as you have reported it.

And I'll get to that as soon as I can. Gotta get some school work done.

Danny

27. on 19 Sep 2010 at 11:53 pm²⁷ robert

Marc

You have 4 Gods

the last being commentaries
sorry but I dont follow opinions not based on facts

28. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 12:09 am*²⁸ *Marc Taylor*

Robert,
You follow what you think the words mean thus you created another god for yourself....you.

29. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 12:10 am*²⁹ *Marc Taylor*

OK Danny thank you. I was able to access it at a library here.

30. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 12:13 am*³⁰ *robert*

Marc if you wanted to be honest you would include the same word in greek means SAINT but that isnt how holy is used for GOD.

YES JESUS WAS A SAINT

Other refernce is about Gods spirit not Jesus

Pronunciation: hag'-ee-os

Origin: from hagos (an awful thing) [cf 53, 2282]

Reference: TDNT - 1:88,14

PrtSpch: adj

In Greek: agia 8, agiai 1, agiaiv 3, agian 6, agiav 3, agie 1, agioi 8, agioiv 19, agion 43, agiou 42, agiou 12, agiov 13, agiw 26, agiwn 35, agiwtath 1, [agiou] 1
In NET: Holy 91, saints 58, holy 49, a holy 7, Holy One 5, Holy Spirit 1, all 1, a Holy 1, holiness 1, set apart 1, to saints 1, most holy 1, holy ones 1, with Holy 1, believers 1

In AV: holy 161, saints 61, Holy One 4, misc 3

31. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 12:41 am*³¹ *Marc Taylor*

The lexicons make a difference.

32. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 7:53 am*³² *robert*

“The lexicons make a difference.”

Marc

Yes i have seen how much difference they make when you jump from one to the other when one doesnt support your view.

33. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 6:05 pm*³³ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc (msg. #18)

You said, "DT, But people and creatures are not absolutely good. Christ is equally so as the Father."

The scriptural definition of the word 'good' is to do the will of God (Father/Creator). This is where our different beliefs come into play. I believe Yeshua/Jesus was a person (one of the people) and could have sinned like anyone else, but he didn't. You believe that he was the 2nd. person in the Trinity and was the same being as God (the Father/Creator), and therefore it would have been impossible for him to have went against God's will.

If this were true it would make the whole story of the temptation in the desert a hoax perpetrated as part of some elaborate charade in order to fool Christians into believing that Yeshua/Jesus was actually tempted by Satan. If Yeshua/Jesus was the 2nd. person in the Trinity and personally created the universe and everything in it, then it logically follows he would have created Satan and the angels as well.

How could Satan have tempted his own Creator???

According to what you have said, you believe Yeshua/Jesus had all the powers of Almighty God during his time on earth but chose not to use them. If this were true, how could Satan have tempted Yeshua/Jesus in Mathew 4:5-6; with throwing himself off the temple. Certainly if he had all the powers of the Almighty he could have chose to save himself, without having to rely on God (the Father) to send his angels to bear him up lest he strike his foot against a stone.

And then in Mathew 4:8-9 where it says, "Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and there glory. And he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you fall down and worship me.' ..."

If Yeshua/Jesus was inherently Almighty (or God), how could he be tempted with the glory of primitive worldly kingdoms, or any kingdoms for that matter???

I think it is obvious that Christ was completely human and (like everyone) had to rely on Almighty God for any goodness that he may of had. Doing good is doing the will of God. Therefore without God (the Father/Creator) we would have no biblical definition of what is good and what wasn't.

At least that's the way I see it anywaze...

34. on 20 Sep 2010 at 6:50 pm³⁴ Marc Taylor

DT,

Satan could have tempted his own Creator for Christ became a man. Furthermore, Satan is delusional by his power that he has now which wouldn't prevent him

from challenging Christ.

As with many people who deny Christ's deity you select Bible passages that show He is a man but disregard those that prove He is God.

Psalms 119:160 says the sum of God's word is truth. Not certain parts of it but all of it.

35. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 7:01 pm*³⁵ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,

From what I can see, there are no passages that 'prove' He is God. Just unspecific vague passages from which you and others infer/imply that Yeshua/Jesus is God...

36. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 7:25 pm*³⁶ *Marc Taylor*

DT,

Then the problem is with your seeing and not what the passages teach.

37. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 8:29 pm*³⁷ *Ray*

It seems to me that a man may say that Jesus is God and be as correct as the man that says that Jesus is not God. It all depends on what he means and how he is using the words by their meanings which at times may differ depending on how they are used.

We have a lot of liberty on these matters. But let's use our liberty for the sake of furthering a brother on the right path if indeed we know where it is and how it goes.

It seems to me that there may even be a situation that may arise in which a man may say that there was not anyone with Jesus when he created the heaven and earth in the beginning, not Plato, not Socrates, not Buddha, not Muhammad, not Joseph Smith, not

Billy Graham, not you or I either, though this does not mean that he could not hear of us, see us, or know of those who would come after him. And this also does not mean that God was not with him.

It seems to me that the prophet Isaiah used similar language when he wrote of things which I read of, especially between chapters 42-45. When I read of these things it seems to me that a man may say that both Jesus and God the Father said the same things together, and this is a great mystery.

I am one that does not put Hebrews 1:10-12 into a parenthesis as I believe those verses apply to both God the Father and Jesus the Son, as do so many other scriptures about God. As I have said, this is a great mystery.

One may believe that Jesus existed before his divine conception but being limited to that of a promise of God, a prophetic word given about him by the prophets, or as a declaration of faith that later came to be, and was found to be true.

Another may believe that Jesus was indeed a being, in the form of God prior to his conception in the womb of Mary, as a person exists because that person presently is.

Some believe more than others.

Some like the phrase “God in three persons, blessed Trinity.”, while another prefers ” God in Christ Jesus, blessed Diety.” instead.

Who has the right to impose one way over another? Yet we may discuss what we believe with the intent of furthering one another on the right way. If and when we have found ourselves to have walked out of the way of Christ, then let’s repent, find our salvation at the cross, make things right and find the better way to walk and do it in Christ as best we can. There is nothing good outside of him.

38. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 8:51 pm* 38 *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,

Actually the problem is with you and others inferring/impling from vague passages, which don’t explicitly and clearly teach what you claim, and then extrapolating from this the ridiculous claim, that it is clearly taught, or that it proves something, which in fact it doesn’t.

Like I’ve said many times before in my messages above, you should have at least one clear unambiguous scripture that says, Yeshua/Jesus is God, or that God died for our sins, or that God is 3 persons in one, etc...

You also didn’t answer, how the 2nd. person in the Trinity, who personally created the universe and everything in it, could be tempted with promises of being given primitive worldly kingdoms to control and govern???

Did he forget that he had created the world and everything in it???

If he was actually God, how could He (the creator of the universe) have been tempted in the slightest bit to bow down and worship Satan???

In short, your version of the temptation of Christ makes a mockery out of the trials and tribulations of the human Yeshua/Jesus. According to you he was inherently good and it was impossible for him to do anything wrong. So, how could there have even been any kind of temptation whatsoever???

Like I said above, your views reduce his temptation in the desert to a hoax, or at best an elaborate charade, that was performed for some unexplained reason...

39. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 9:09 pm*³⁹ *Marc Taylor*

DT,

The passages are clear but they are unclear to those who choose to “muddy the waters”.

As I previously wrote there is more than one way to express a truth claim. If I said, “She is my daughter” there is no need for me to tell you that she is a female.

I answered your question... Christ was also a man and Satan can be so deluded by his power that he might believe that Christ would submit to him.

40. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 10:20 pm*⁴⁰ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,

You said, “The passages are clear...”

My whole point is that they are not clear, and are only comprehensible to someone that holds a preconception of the doctrine of the Trinity actually means!!!

If you were able to give the bible to someone, who somehow had never heard of the Trinity, and had them study it for a year or so, with no extra biblical writings to study. It would be impossible for them to come up with this complex theory of the Trinity, that originally took centuries of arguing, debating, and compromising, which finally ended near the end of the 4th. century, with the doctrine we have today.

You also said, “If I said, ‘She is my daughter’ there is no need for me to tell you she is a female’..”

That is of course true. But you WOULD have to explicitly tell me that she was also her own mother, but yet somehow still a separate person from her mother. Otherwise I wouldn’t have a clue, would I???

You also didn’t answer how a person/deity that created the universe and everything in it could be tempted by with promises of being given primitive worldly kingdoms to control and govern???

Did He forget that he had created the universe and everything in it???

You also didn’t answer, how God (the creator of the universe) and who created Satan and the angels, could have been tempted in the slightest bit to bow down and worship Satan???

You just said that, “Satan can be so delusional by his power that he might believe that Christ would submit to him.”

From what I can see, you are saying that there was never the slightest chance that Yeshua/Jesus would have submitted to him (Satan). In other words, you are saying that in reality there was never any real temptation in the desert. Which brings up the obvious question then of, Why did Yeshua/Jesus go through this elaborate charade???

What possible explanation could you provide, that would explain that the very first thing Yeshua/Jesus did after his baptism, was to fast for 40 days and nights in the desert, and then (pretend) to be tempted by Satan???

41. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 10:45 pm*⁴¹ *Frank D*

If he is God, why bother fasting. What’s the point?

42. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 11:20 pm*⁴² *Marc Taylor*

FrankD,
Because He is also a man.

DT,
It is clear that Christ is God by the fact that he is properly prayed to which necessitates omniscience and omnipotence.

43. *on 20 Sep 2010 at 11:52 pm*⁴³ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,
You are just implying that, “It is clear Christ is God by the fact that he is properly prayed to which necessitates omniscience and omnipotence.”

I’ve already told you that there is nothing strange about a person who is sitting at the right hand of God, and who has been given (from someone else) all authority in heaven and on earth, to be properly prayed to. Especially when part of his job is to be the mediator between us and God.

That is another thing about the Trinity that doesn’t seem to make any sense to me. How can Almighty God be the mediator between us and God??? The way I see it only a human Yeshua/Jesus could be a mediator between us and God. The fact that Yeshua/Jesus had to depend on someone else (his/our Father) to give him all authority in heaven in earth, then it is impossible for him to be Almighty.

For someone to be Almighty they must not have to depend on anyone else to give them anything. An Almighty being, by definition, would not have to depend on

someone else to give them authority of any kind, since if they were really Almighty, they would already have possessed ALL authority to begin with.

I wish you could see how you are reading the doctrine of the Trinity into the biblical passages, where a much simpler and easier explanation is available. Why would God want to pretend to be his own son anyway??? I don't understand why in Luke 9:35, it says, ""And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!'. . ."

I honestly don't understand how anyone can reconcile the fact that Yeshua/Jesus is not God, but yet at the same time claim that they are one being (both being Almighty). Especially when there is no clear, implicit, scripture that says this, or explains how this can possibly be.

I'm sorry, but like I said in my messages above, the Trinity doesn't seem to make any sense to me...

44. *on 21 Sep 2010 at 1:59 am*⁴⁴ *Marc Taylor*

DT,

An omniscient Being is by definition "God" - the same holds true for an omnipotent Being.

45. *on 21 Sep 2010 at 11:06 am*⁴⁵ *Ray*

It seems to me that an all powerful ruler, such as a king in his kingdom is by definition a god. (though he may or may not fit all the definitions of that word "god". He wouldn't have to, to qualify as a god.) If his kingdom is the kingdom of heaven, then there is good reason to refer to him as God, even as one knows that there is one who is greater than he, whom he loves and serves. To compare such a one to God would not be wrong. So it is that way with Jesus.

Joseph being under Pharaoh (after the Pharaoh promoted him to his high position) could be referred to as the Pharaoh by a slave and it wouldn't necessarily be a wrong use of the word Pharaoh, even though there is a difference between Joseph and the king of Egypt.

An example of this would be if two slaves were working some kind of work and one says to the other, "Be careful what you say. He is Pharaoh."

When I read Matthew 24:36, it seems to me that Jesus may have been included among the group of those who did not know the the day and hour of his coming in Judgment in the kingdom, for he said that no man knows, nor the angels of heaven, but God only.

If Jesus does indeed know the time and day of his coming, I haven't seen it revealed in scripture.

If a man perceives Jesus as God in every way to the fullest extent possible, I could see how he might think or presume that Jesus knows the exact time and hour of his coming. It seems to me that the Trinitarian view of Jesus is to see him as God, as far as they could possibly allow, and it seems to many a Christian, they often go over the bounds, over the limits, beyond what the scriptures have said.

That's one reason I am not a Trinitarian, nor do I have any desire to be of that particular discipline or persuasion. It simply is the cause of too much trouble in the church, in my opinion, something that is not necessary for a Christian to be doing. It's not how I want to spend my life. There's far too much work to be done for the king of glory in my opinion.

46. on 21 Sep 2010 at 5:56 pm⁴⁶ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,

You said, "An omniscient Being is by definition - 'God' - the same holds true for an omnipotent Being."

I understand you believe Yeshua/Jesus is 'God' and as result believe he is omniscient and omnipotent, but you have not provided one scripture that clearly says he is omniscient or omnipotent. You just repeatedly say he is without providing any proof, other then saying it's your own opinion, or that if it's proper to pray to him he must be etc...

I (and Ray above) have both mentioned Mathew 24:36, where Yeshua/Jesus says, "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only." (ESV)

If Yeshua/Jesus doesn't know the day nor the hour of the end times, and doesn't know when he will be returning as well, then how can you continue to repeat over and over again that he is omniscient???

What scripture can you provide that clearly says he is omniscient???

Do you just imply it indirectly from unspecific passages, the same way you imply that he is Almighty God???

As for being omnipotent I have repeatedly pointed out that in Mathew 28:18, it says, "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been GIVEN TO ME.'..." (ESV - Emphasis mine).

If someone (the Father) gave him 'All authority in heaven and on earth' then it logically follows that this someone is much greater than Yeshua/Jesus (the Son).

Therefore that completely eliminates the possibility of Yeshua/Jesus being omnipotent. Since in Yeshua's/Jesus' own words someone, who is greater than he, gave him this authority.

Being omnipotent means that NO ONE can be greater or more powerful than you. This seems crystal clear to me. Was Joseph really 'All Powerful' in Egypt, or was he just the representative of someone who was 'All Powerful'???

47. on 21 Sep 2010 at 6:21 pm⁴⁷ Marc Taylor

Joseph could never be referred to as Pharaoh. Colossians 2:3 teaches that Christ has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge - this proves His omniscience. The fact that He has all power proves His omnipotence (Matthew 28:18).

48. on 21 Sep 2010 at 7:23 pm⁴⁸ Doubting Thomas

Marc,

You said, "Colossians 2:3 teaches that Christ has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge - this proves His omniscience."

Again, you simply implying something that is not directly stated and then declaring that your implications/interpretation 'proves it'. This is not a proof. A proof is where Yeshua/Jesus readily admits that there are things he doesn't know, like in Mathew 24:36. How can someone who is omniscient not know about certain things that someone else (His Father) knows about???

You also said, "The fact that He has all power proves His omnipotence (Matthew 28:18)."

I can't believe your quoting the same verse that I have repeatedly quoted, and on top of that you ignore the words that I had even CAPITALIZED for you in msg. #46. "...has been GIVEN TO ME." (ESV - emphasis mine). What part of giving don't you understand???

You are completely ignoring the fact that someone more powerful than Yeshua/Jesus (his/our Father), 'GAVE HIM' "All authority on heaven and on earth". Just like in the OT someone more powerful than Joseph 'GAVE HIM' all authority throughout the land of Egypt...

49. on 21 Sep 2010 at 7:31 pm⁴⁹ robert

Marc

You could create a company and then assign all authority to the CEO even proxy the voting shares. Would the CEO now be to creator of the company?

The Ceo could even buy the company but could not ever be the creator of the company.

You can give away everything but who you are and what you have accomplished will always be yours.

Yes Jesus was Giving Authority to even act as God when it comes to those in heaven and on earth but That doesn't make Him Equal to God Yahweh, Just makes him a servant with authority like a CEO.

50. *on 21 Sep 2010 at 7:53 pm*50 *Marc Taylor*

DT,

What is recorded in Matthew took place before Christ was glorified. If you can't see that Colossians 2:3 teaches that Christ has all wisdom then...well ya know. The fact that Christ has all-power (which you don't deny) proves he is omnipotent. He was given the right to now exercise what He always had. Why couldn't he have chose not to employ it during His time on the earth?

Robert,

Your example doesn't work because we are talking about ALL power over the created universe and an omnipotent Being. Indeed, Christ originally had this before the universe was created (John 17:5) which demonstrates His eternity.

51. *on 21 Sep 2010 at 8:55 pm*51 *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,

You said, "If you can't see that Colossians 2:3 teaches that Christ has all wisdom then...well ya know."

I didn't say that Colossians 2:3 doesn't teach that Christ has all wisdom. I just said your implied interpretation that "this proves His omniscience" is basically flawed. God the Father gave his Son all his wisdom so that Yeshua/Jesus could justly and properly utilize the other thing that was also 'GIVEN' to him, which was "All authority in heaven and on earth".

You also keep ignoring the fact that being omnipotent means (by definition) that no one can be greater than you. The person who gave "All authority on heaven and on earth" is obviously greater than the person who received it.

You also said, "He was given the right to now exercise what He always had."

Again you are taking something that you believed, prior to even studying the bible, and trying to claim that passages like Mathew 28:18 somehow support your preconceptions. This passage does not say that "He was given the right to now exercise what He always had." It clearly says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been GIVEN TO ME." (my emphasis).

You also said, "Why couldn't he have chose not to employ it during His time on the earth?"

Why doesn't the bible say anything about this then???

You can make up any storyline outside of what the bible clearly teaches that you want to, but don't try to say that it is based on bible passages, when it is clearly not even indirectly implied. Like I said before. If you didn't know about this complex doctrine of the Trinity before you began to study the bible, then there is no way you could come up with this complex theory from reading the bible by itself (without reading any extra biblical writings).

At least that's the way I see it anywaze...

52. on 21 Sep 2010 at 11:12 pm52 Ray

The power that Jesus has is the power that God gave him, no more and no less. It is limited by how much power God gave him.

All that there is to receive of God is how much Jesus has. I trust that God likely gave him all the power that he has, certainly at least as much as he will need to deliver everything that will be delivered to God.

Jesus certainly had enough power to create all that is, excepting him who gave him that power, for God was created by no one.

Thus, we should see Jesus as God.

Clearly it isn't necessarily wrong if someone making a play or movie about Joseph in Egypt, would write the script such that a slave would refer to Joseph as Pharaoh, even though all the viewers know the difference.

To us, Jesus is the wisdom of God, for what difference is there, really? Technically there is somewhat of a distinction. I am aware of that, but in some practical sense, what really is the difference?

You see, there is a sense about our words and there are legitimate ways to use them, even in some ways we are unaccustomed to use them, but they can be used in those ways. Sometimes I will find that I said something in a way I had never said before, or at least don't remember saying it that way before. That by itself doesn't mean that it's wrong necessarily, though someone who is looking for a fault may find some fault in how I said it. Whether it is a legitimate fault on my part or not will be judged by the Lord Jesus Christ.

People tell us what they are about. Some people may as well say, "I like to make up my own rules that I decide others must follow." Their actions tell us what they are about.

I believe Jesus is God, but there is a sense in which I say so. I do not want to promote the Trinitarian doctrine. I could say that he is all of God, and is God as much as “as is” is as “as is” is. I suppose that just sounds like rhetoric to some. Maybe I should say that he is God just as much as a blue sky is blue.

I suppose I can say that Jesus is the Son of God. That is who he is. What Jesus is, is God Almighty. That to me is what he is.

We are not all going to be exactly like one another. That’s not any of our callings. Life in Christ just isn’t a look alike contest where the one who looks most like everybody else wins. That would be a difficult contest to judge it seems to me. I suppose we would need a standard.

Now let’s think about who and what Jesus is and consider our future if we continue in him and become as he is. Now isn’t that a bright future?

I find in life that there are some minute points that are not worth battling over. We will choose our battles, and some of the battles will come to us.

Maybe I should say about this or that, “I don’t know, maybe it’s so, but I’m not sure, could be something like that, but I just don’t know for sure if all of that is correct. Some of it seems doubtful right now to me and here is why I say so...”

I don’t want to be as the officers of the Law in James Ryle’s dream/vision The Sons of Thunder, which can be googled. More guns and ammo, tighter locking of elbows, and more protection might not be the answer, but may in fact be a symptom of a much greater problem.

The symptom of the problem is a problem but is not the greater underlying problem. It will not be solved by more clubs and gear, and tighter interlocking of elbows.

I think we should ask ourselves “What is it about the monument they were defending and what caused them to be enamored with it? Were they enamored by it and if so, why? Was it the monument that enamored them, or were they being charmed by something else? Why the enchantment? Was something just a bit off? Did God tell men to build the thing or was it simply allowed by God? Is it for a test of some sort? Is it a part of God’s judgment? Does he want it taken down, or simply left alone? Should we be occupied by it, and if so, for how long? “

53. on 21 Sep 2010 at 11:39 pm53 Marc Taylor

DT,

All wisdom does not mean omniscience?

The Bible does say about Christ humbling Himself and taking on the form of a servant. A servant must submit to somebody.

—
Ray,
We are talking about reality not some fictitious movie.

54. on 21 Sep 2010 at 11:54 pm⁵⁴ *Doubting Thomas*

Ray,
You said, “The power that Jesus has is the power that God gave him, no more and no less.”

I agree completely. We should expect that God would give our Lord, King, and Messiah such power, so that he can reign over us on behalf of his Father (God Almighty).

You also said, “To us, Jesus is the wisdom of God, for what difference is there, really? Technically there is somewhat of a distinction. I am aware of that, but in some practical sense, what really is the difference?”

You are correct, that the right hand of God would not be any different than God himself. The only practical difference is that by denying that he was a human being, born of a human mother, you are denying the trials, tribulations, and temptations that Yeshua/Jesus had to undergo on our behalf. Not to mention the pain and suffering that he also had to undergo after the Last Supper before his glorious resurrection.

You also said, “We are not all going to be exactly like one another. That’s not any of our callings. Life in Christ just isn’t a look alike contest where the one who looks most like everyone else wins.”

Again, I agree with you. I don’t expect Marc and others to be exactly the same as I am. For God created each of us to be a unique child that he could love and cherish. I was just trying, to the best of my ability, to explain to him, why I believe what it is I believe...

55. on 22 Sep 2010 at 12:33 am⁵⁵ *Marc Taylor*

DT,
Thanks but time to move on. Since all power in Matthew 28:18 and all wisdom in Colossians 2:3 are not enough to convince you of His omniscience I seriously doubt if there is any other way to convince those who refuse to see it.

Later

56. on 22 Sep 2010 at 7:33 am⁵⁶ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc, (#53)

You asked, “All wisdom does not meant omniscience?”

In order to have omniscience you require more than just ‘all wisdom’ you also require ‘all knowledge’. There cannot be factual events, like when the end days are going to be, or when you will be returning to establish your kingdom, that another person (the Father) knows, but you don’t know. Of course I ‘ve already pointed this out to you many times before.

You also said, “The bible does say about Christ humbling Himself and taking on the form of a servant.”

Yeshua/Jesus not only humbled himself so that he could be a servant to God (the Father), but he also humbled himself so that he could be servant to all of humankind. Serving as the perfect lamb without blemish or defect, who suffered and died for our sins.

He couldn’t have humbled himself any more, or been more of a servant than he was for us as well as his Father/our Father. But, that does not mean that he pre-existed as some kind of supernatural being.

If you want to interpret all these verses you mention to mean that Yeshua/Jesus was some sort of pre-existing supernatural being (God person), when there is a much easier and much simpler explanation available, you are of course free to do so. But, if you do, you have no choice but to ignore many clear and precise prophesies from the OT regarding the Messiah.

The Messiah was prophesied to be “like Moses, from among you, from your brothers.” There are also many prophesies that very clearly state that the coming Messiah/King would be a descendant of David or in some passages, it says, the son of David. There is no way you can twist a pre-existing supernatural being (God person), that existed since the very beginning, even before creation, to fit with any of these prophesies.

That leaves you with no option, but to completely ignore these clear and precise bible passages from the OT.

In msg. #55, you said, “Thanks but time to move on.”

To be honest, I was thinking the same thing. It seems we are just talking in circles at this point (repeating the same things). I hope there are no hard feelings on your part and that we can be friends. I also hope that even if I didn’t convince you, to see what it is that I see, then at least I hope that I convinced you to change your mind about whether people like me (who don’t believe in the Trinity), can achieve salvation or not.

You must admit, that God is probably not going to punish people like me, just because we refuse to try to force the Trinity doctrine into all these various passages that we have been discussing. I believe God is much more interested in how we treat each other, then what doctrines we may or may not believe.

May the peace of God be with you, and with us all, and God bless...

57. on 22 Sep 2010 at 6:59 pm57 Ray

Thomas, I read post 54, and it seemed as though you are saying that I do not know that Jesus was a real human being and that I deny his trials and such.

That is not a true perspective of mine. I don't know how you can imagine such a thing came from me. It did not. I did not say any of those things.

It seems that you accuse me of denying his birth from Mary his mother, something I have often told you of. Why would you attack me falsely in this manner?

Is your God given purpose to deliberately destroy the church by false accusations? Please repent, in Jesus' name.

Mark Taylor, when I was writing about a fictitious movie I was showing you how words are really used. I was speaking to you something about a reality you need to accept.

58. on 22 Sep 2010 at 7:45 pm58 Doubting Thomas

Ray

In msg. #52 you asked, "To us, Jesus is the wisdom of God, for what difference is there really? Technically there is somewhat of a distinction. I am aware of that, but in some practical sense what really is the difference?"

I thought you were asking me, What is the practical difference between what Unitarians believe and what Trinitarians believe??? In my response in msg. #54, I was just trying to show the difference between these two different beliefs. I am truly sorry if I misunderstood what it was you were asking in the above question, and I whole heartedly repent for any false accusations I may have made against you and your beliefs.

Like I said, I was talking about the beliefs that Trinitarians have and not your beliefs. Please accept my apology...

59. on 22 Sep 2010 at 9:56 pm59 Marc Taylor

OK DT. Thanks for your input.

60. *on 22 Sep 2010 at 10:15 pm*60 Ray

Marc Taylor,

It seems to me that it is OK for a play writer to write his script in such a way that he might call one man by the position of another by a character in his script and that doing such could be a proper use of language as we know it if it were done according to the proper rule of language.

It seems to me that your position of this is that such a thing is simply fantasy and has no bearing on the topic we are talking about.

If I have expressed your view clearly here please let me know.

I do differ with your view on this matter.

It seems to me that it's OK for a man to say that Jesus is God even though the knows Jesus to be God's Son, and that he may do so even as he knows there is a distinction between Jesus and God, but because he is as God is, to him, and even as he believes that Jesus is as God is toward all men and will be as God is toward all, with all the power of God and all the knowledge of God such as he does possess, he therefore will say that Jesus is God at times, even though he has not bought into the dicipline of the Trinitarians, nor does he have any desire to be of their persuasion.

How does that man's view of God and Jesus (from what you know of it) differ from yours?

Please talk to us about this.

61. *on 22 Sep 2010 at 10:29 pm*61 Ray

Thomas, I accept your apology. I've often felt in the past that I have been used by people for their purposes and am sensitive to it.

Sometimes I have overreacted. It's good to have a cause or purpose when it is right, and even if it is not the best cause, if one fights for it in right ways he can learn much from the experience. It's good to go for higher ground whenever we can see it. If we can see it we really do need to go toward it.

62. *on 22 Sep 2010 at 10:48 pm*62 *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,

I would like to thank you for being open an honest about your beliefs. I've never actually had this deep of a conversation with a Trinitarian before. Usually they don't want to talk in detail about, why it is they believe what they do, or they just out and out dismiss me as a heretic. I also appreciate the fact that you are polite and respectful. Something I have a lot of respect for...

Ray,

You said, "I've often felt in the past that I have been used by people for their purposes and am sensitive to it."

I also am sensitive about some things and have been known to overreact at times. One thing that really annoys me is when someone won't give me a direct answer to a direct question. I believe in honest dialogue and get very frustrated when I am talking with people like that. That's probably one of my biggest weaknesses/faults, is that I tend to get frustrated very easily. Especially with technology... 😊

63. on 23 Sep 2010 at 12:08 am63 Marc Taylor

Ray,

I just haven't seen any evidence where Joseph was ever referred to as "Pharaoh". The view that you described does not differ from mine in that Jesus is God and yet distinct from God the Father.

—

Thank you DT.

When Colossians 2:3 teaches that Christ has all the treasures of "wisdom and knowledge" does that not demand that Christ is omniscient?

64. on 23 Sep 2010 at 6:02 pm64 Doubting Thomas

Marc,

From my reading of Colossians 2:1-3, Paul is encouraging the church at Laodicea wishing, "(2) that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, (3) in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (ESV).

It is indisputable that, before his assentation, there were things that God (the Father) knew that his son Yeshua/Jesus did not know. It is most likely that after his assentation, he was given much more knowledge than he had previously possessed. The bible is not really clear about whether Yeshua/Jesus, even today, possess 'all knowledge'.

It does say he has 'all the treasures' of wisdom and knowledge, but it doesn't say he has 'all knowledge'. Possessing 'all the treasures' is not the same thing as possessing 'all the knowledge'. I am not a linguist but that is how it seems to me. Nevertheless it is indisputable that he was not omniscient before his assentation, and, from what I can see, it is not even clear that he is omniscient now.

Of course, I am just a layman, and this is just my own personal opinion...

65. on 23 Sep 2010 at 7:28 pm65 robert

“It is indisputable that, before his assentation, there were things that God (the Father) knew that his son Yeshua/Jesus did not know. It is most likely that after his assentation, he was given much more knowledge than he had previously possessed.”

Thomas

I fully agree that Jesus' knowledge and power was increased when he was exalted to the right hand of God. Does that mean he is omniscient and omnipotent?

Absolutely not because to be omniscient requires that you would of allways knew everything therefore it would be impossible to increase in knowledge or to receive it and to be omnipotent requires that you always possesed ALL POWER and would be impossible for you to receive it because than you wouldnt of been all powerful.

Now after Jesus was exalted would it be fitting for humankind to call him a God,pray through him or mention him as a member of the heavingly council along with God and His Spirit.

Why not! but remember he was exalted to that position when he acended to God after His resurrection and was a complete human at birth and was possessed by the Holy spirit at his Baptism giving Him the authority to Preach the WORD that the Holy spirit commanded him to preach

66. on 23 Sep 2010 at 8:04 pm66 Ray

Marc,

I referred to Joseph as Pharaoh but I haven't seen it done in the Bible either.

What if a guy wrote a story about two men who as children used to set up their armies (little plastic army men) in a sandbox and then took turns lighting firecrackers and throwing them, and the one with the most left standing would win the battle, and then they both grew up and one became a general and the other became a scientist who developed a hydrogen bomb and they happened to be together when all this was being developed and one says to the other, “This hydrogen thing, is it a black cat, or maybe a Zebra?”, and the scientist says, “It's more like a cherry bomb.”....

67. on 23 Sep 2010 at 8:15 pm67 Doubtng Thomas

Ray,

I'm sorry, but I don't really understand the analogy your trying to make. But, then again, I also didn't see this movie you and Marc are talking about...

68. on 24 Sep 2010 at 12:29 am68 Marc Taylor

DT,

1. Colossians 2:3: Thayer says treasures is used epexegetically (page 291). Thus the treasures are all the wisdom and knowledge.

2. Christ is the heartknower in Acts 1:24 and heartknower is defined as being omniscient:
 - a. NIDNTT: This belief in the omniscience of God is expressed succinctly by the adj. kardiognswttess (2:183, Heart - T. Sorg).
 - b. TDNT: the omniscient God knows the innermost being of every man where the decision is made either for Him or against Him (3:613, kardiognwstees - Behm).
3. Because only God is omniscient this necessitates that Christ is God:
 - a. NIDNTT: God alone can reveal the things hidden in the heart of man (1 Cor. 4:5), examine them (Rom. 8:27) and test them (1 Thess. 2:4) (2:183, Heart - T. Sorg).
4. John 2:24, 25
 - a. NIDNTT: He sees Nathanael under the fig tree (1:48) and the thoughts and inner nature of man (2:25) (3:517, See - K. Dahn).
 - b. TDNT: the Johannine Christ knows the hearts (Jn. 2:25; 21:17) (TDNT 3:613, kardiognwstees, footnote #1 - Behm).
 - c. Thayer: to know one, his person, character, mind, plans: Jn. 1.48 (49); 2.24 (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, ginwskw, page 117).

69. on 24 Sep 2010 at 12:47 pm⁶⁹ Karl

Hi Mark,

2. Christ is the heartknower in Acts 1:24 and heartknower is defined as being omniscient:

How do we know that Christ is being addressed as "Lord" in Acts 1:24? How do we know that the Father is not being addressed?

70. on 24 Sep 2010 at 4:27 pm⁷⁰ Doubting Thomas

Marc,

I agree that the treasures are the wisdom and knowledge. But, I don't agree that having 'all the treasures' equals having 'all the knowledge'. If Paul wanted to say that Yeshua/Jesus was omniscient and possessed 'all knowledge', then why didn't he just come out and say that, instead of saying, "in whom all hidden all the treasures."

It seems to me that Paul is saying, that all the treasures that a Christian could long for, or need, can be found in (the teachings of) Christ. All wisdom and knowledge that you need to be a good Christian, that will please God (the Father), and will help you to attain salvation, can be found within the teachings of his Son Yeshua/Jesus.

In other words these treasures (wisdom and knowledge) are hidden in the teachings of Christ, for his followers to discover, so they can enrich their lives and live abundantly and faithfully, as God wants all of his children to live.

I'm not an expert, but that's the way I read it, anywaze...

71. on 24 Sep 2010 at 7:13 pm⁷¹ Ray

Christ as the good shepherd knows his sheep. That by itself may be enough for me to receive that he knows what is in the heart of those that are his.

I don't know if Jesus knows everything. I really don't. I know he knows enough, more than enough for me to trust him. Is it just his knowledge that causes a man to trust him? I believe he fully knows God. I believe he knows the one who is infinite in knowledge. I wonder what God withholds from him,... maybe nothing.

Some may wonder how it is that a man can say he believes Jesus is God and yet wonder if Jesus knows everything there is to know, or if he has all the knowledge God has in everything without any exception.

I suppose it's because I read Matthew 24:36. I wonder if Jesus right now knows that day when it will be. I say I wonder because I really don't know. Maybe some people do know that Jesus knows, but I say I am one that isn't sure.

And if I stand on the truth, am I not in a safe place? Isn't it OK for me to be there?

72. on 24 Sep 2010 at 7:18 pm⁷² Marc Taylor

Hello Karl,

The evidence is overwhelming that Christ is being addressed in Acts 1:24. If it read theos people would insist that they were praying to the Father but it reads kurios. This title is primarily used for the Lord Jesus. The evidence must be quite compelling that it doesn't.

There is much more evidence but I'll wait to see if those that deny Christ is being prayed to here (or anywhere else) will do with what I have written thus far.

Hello DT,

I already addressed that. The phrase is exegetical.

John 2 also teaches that Christ is omniscient.

73. on 24 Sep 2010 at 8:48 pm⁷³ Doubting Thomas

Marc,

I googled exegetical and it comes from the word 'exegesis' which means 'Additional explanation or explanatory material'.

This additional explanation you quoted from Thayers, that 'the treasures are all the wisdom and knowledge', you seem to have interpreted/explained as 'the treasures are ALL wisdom and ALL knowledge'. Neither of these two interpretations/explanations come from the bible passage itself.

It seems your whole argument rests on your interpretation/explanation of someone else's interpretation/explanation, and not on what the passage actually says. As I've pointed out before an implication, or interpretation is nothing more than an opinion, and is not a proof.

The passage clearly says, "in whom are hidden all the treasures", it does not say in whom are hidden 'All wisdom' and 'All knowledge'. The passage then goes on to clearly say that these treasures are "wisdom and knowledge." I don't understand why you would think that quoting this other person's opinion would constitute a proof of some sort.

I believe proofs come from God's word, not from the opinions of people...

74. on 24 Sep 2010 at 8:50 pm74 Ray

John 2 teaches that Christ is omniscient? I don't see that.

I looked again at Matthew 24:36 and see that Jesus had just stated in the previous verse that his words shall not pass away.

So I am inclined to say that Matthew 24:36 could be one of those words which is still in effect just as it is written.

I suppose a man could take the position that Matthew 24:36 belonged to the time in which Jesus said it and to that time only, but I wonder if that would stand.

I'm inclined to think that to this day it's something that only the Father knows just as it appears that Jesus had said. It seems rather clear to me that at the time Jesus said it, he was saying that only the Father knew of that day and hour, and so it seems to me that he was letting us know that Jesus himself did not know the day and hour of that time.

At any rate, as to when that day and hour will be is something the Father knows, and it appears to me that no one else knows. It seems to me that Jesus will be the first to know, when the Father tells him when it is.

That's what it looks like to me.

75. on 24 Sep 2010 at 9:16 pm75 Ray

I looked at John 4 about the woman at the well. Her testimony of Jesus was that she met a man that told her all things that ever she did. (John 4:29)

I've heard a minister say that some people he has ministered to, seem to think that he knows everything about them because he told them something which he received from God. He told us that he doesn't know everything but only some

things that God tells him
when he ministers.

I suppose a man could try to make the case that such is the case with Jesus when he ministered to people, or a man could make the case that Jesus already knew all things about everybody.

Which case do you think would be easier to make?

If Jesus knew everything all the time, why was he so often hearing from the Father?

I can see where a man might say "Jesus knows everything." That I can see.

76. on 24 Sep 2010 at 9:26 pm76 Ray

When a man ministers with the gifts of the spirit to others, he may seem like Jesus to them, while Jesus is as God to him.

77. on 25 Sep 2010 at 2:01 am77 Marc Taylor

DT,

If I said "He has all the treasures of gold and silver" I am referring to the fact that all the gold and silver belongs to him. It is very clear. And the Bible teaches elsewhere that Christ is omniscient (John 2:24, 25; Acts 1:24, 25).

Ray,

The people don't mean "everything" in the absolute sense. It's simply a manner of speaking. Ask this minister if he knows when their parents were born, where they were born, where they met, etc etc.

No one else but the omniscient God can be properly referred to as "heartknower" as Christ is in Acts 1:24.

78. on 25 Sep 2010 at 7:30 am78 robert

"If I said "He has all the treasures of gold and silver" I am referring to the fact that all the gold and silver belongs to him. "

Marc

This is where your logic fails completely.

The gold and silver just describe what kind of treasures, Now if it was to say the treasures of all the gold and silver then that could mean what you say but not always.

But you can make it say whatever you want to support your belief and those who share your belief will back you and those that believe different will oppose

,whether or not its right.
Its very hard to find an unbiased opinion on this.

79. on 25 Sep 2010 at 7:58 am79 robert

Marc

Here in this verse we see that Jesus says that THE FATHER is the only one that knows the times and seasons which makes Jesus less in Knowledge therefore making him NOT omniscient.

Unless your willing to call Jesus a liar then you must stop claiming he is omniscient NOW!

Acts 1

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, [1] after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:

Plus in this verse it shows that God had to give Jesus this knowledge to show his servants. Some people have a problem with Revelation because they feel that Jesus would of mentioned this while he was living, But he couldnt because God hadnt shared this knowledge with him yet.

1The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

80. on 25 Sep 2010 at 8:44 am80 Marc Taylor

Robert,
Not only the kind but the amount.....all.

You keep ignoring Acts 1:24.

81. on 25 Sep 2010 at 9:04 am81 robert

Marc

No I am not ignoring Acts 1:24, Considering Jesus Just said in Acts 1:7 he didnt know everything I am pretty sure that your reading of Acts 1:24 is completely out of context.

But most everything you use is out of context!!!

82. on 25 Sep 2010 at 9:35 am82 Doubting Thomas

Marc,

In msg. #80, you said, "Not only the kind but the amount.....all."

I can understand how someone who believes Yeshua/Jesus is omniscient and possess 'all knowledge' could force read your interpretation/explanation into this passage. But, that doesn't change the fact that this is not what the passage actually says. I think I have clearly explained what the passage naturally says, without trying to force read my views into it.

Since we seem to be talking in circles on this passage (repeating ourselves), maybe it would be best if we just agreed to disagree on this. May the peace of God be with you, and with all of us.

Have a good weekend...

83. *on 25 Sep 2010 at 5:29 pm*⁸³ Marc Taylor

Robert,
Thanks for dodging Acts 1:24. I mentioned kardiognwstes in #68 and the passage where it is found (Acts 1:24) in #72 - and in #77. Three times is not enough...perhaps 300 will do in order for you to "see" it.

DT,
It reads "all" in Colossians 2:3.

84. *on 25 Sep 2010 at 5:57 pm*⁸⁴ Ray

Those who hold Jesus to be God in the strict Trinitarian sense may say that to be one who knows all the secrets of the heart of men, one must be God, while those who hold Jesus to be the Son of God and even the Lord God Almighty may say that both Jesus and God the Father know all the secrets in the heart of men.

It seems to me that we have to allow for that flexibility.

I wonder how many have heard of the square watermelons. I saw pictures of square watermelons. They were shaped square and they were all about the same size because the grower put some kind of square baskets around them.

I think the baskets were made of steel wire. They looked just like regular watermelons except that they had the square shape. I've heard that they taste the same as the round melons.

The square ones stack up real nice. Some people don't mind square melons, but others think it's kind o' sad because watermelons are supposed to be round.

I don't really know if watermelons are supposed to be round. I don't think I could make that case well enough to support that as a doctrine. I don't know if it would stand the test of fire at the appearing of the Lord Jesus.

I guess it's a matter of opinion.

Why would a grower do that to melons?

85. *on 25 Sep 2010 at 6:01 pm*85 robert

“Three times is not enough...perhpas 300 will do in order for you to “see” it.”

Marc

I am sure I can dismiss the next 300 as being out of context too, so bring it on!!!

86. *on 25 Sep 2010 at 6:11 pm*86 Ray

When I read Acts 1:24, it looked to me like they were praying to God. These men no doubt had learned to pray to God that way for much of their life. I think it's still OK to pray to God that way. The usual prayers of men like these were to God the Father it seems to me.

I don't believe that men will always address God the Father as “Father” in their prayers.

Can we really prove that these men prayed to Jesus at this time, and that the words we read in Acts 1:24 were addressing the Lord Jesus specifically and that they were not addressing God the Father?

I for one don't know how to make such a case. I wouldn't know where to start. It seems to me that this is one of those gray areas that we should leave gray, unless someone has some clear light on it.

I can see where a man might think they are addressing Jesus in this prayer, and I can see where a man might think they are calling upon God the Father also.

I think it wise to be flexible about these things. I haven't seen scripture prove it one way or the other.

87. *on 25 Sep 2010 at 6:15 pm*87 Ray

Is it OK if I'm not a Trinitarian? I don't think I'm quite ready yet.

88. *on 25 Sep 2010 at 7:11 pm*88 Doubting Thomas

Marc,

In msg. #83 you said, “DT, It reads ‘all’ in Colossions 2:3.”

But, it doesn't say ‘all’ where you wish that it did, in front of the word ‘power’. It says ‘all’ in front of the words ‘the treasures’. Wishing that the word ‘all’ were

located in a different location in the passage doesn't make it so. No matter how many times you repeat the wish/statement.

IN msg. #77 you said, "DT, If I said, 'He has all the treasures of gold and silver' I am referring to the fact that all the gold and silver belong to him. It is very clear."

What is clear, is that you are not understanding what we are trying to explain to you. If I add a modifying clause on to the end of the example, you give above, and said, 'He has all the treasures of gold and silver, that were found in the Caribbean.'

This would not mean that, 'He had all the gold and silver that exists in the world.' Would it??? It would mean exactly what the sentence says, 'He has all the treasures.' No more, no less. Where the treasures are located, or any other modifier describing the treasures, could be implied in the rest of the sentence.

In the passage we are discussing the rest of the sentence reads, "of wisdom and knowledge." There are no modifiers saying it is 'all wisdom' or 'all knowledge'. You are forcibly reading something into the text that it clearly does not say. It seems to me you do the same thing with all the other passage you claim 'proves' Yeshua/Jesus is God. Force reading or wishing something into a bible passage does not make it so.

I really do think we've been going around in circles on this passage long enough. Why don't we just agree to disagree, and move on...

89. on 25 Sep 2010 at 8:17 pm⁸⁹ Marc Taylor

Ray,

When Luke records the expression "Thou hast chosen" (eklegomai) who does he say it refers to previous to the prayer in Acts 1:2?

DT,

I already cited Thayer that it is used epexegetically. Cite a source (besides your opinion) where it doesn't mean that Christ has all wisdom and knowledge in this passage.

90. on 25 Sep 2010 at 9:47 pm⁹⁰ Ray

Marc,

It seems to me that God spoke through David what was spoken of in Acts 1:20. Does that seem right to you?

Like I said, I am not ready to become a Trinitarian yet, even though it does seem clear to me that according to Acts 1:2, the one who was taken up and gave commandments to the apostles was Jesus.

It seems to me that a man might make the case that they may have been praying to God, asking him which of the two men he has chosen to take the place of Judas since it would not seem to out of order for the apostles whom Jesus chose to pray to God on matters such as this, knowing that Jesus taught them to pray to God.

It seems to me that a man might make the case that the apostles decided to do this because of what was written in the Psalm knowing that it was God who spoke through the prophet David.

I would not want to be one who attempts to prove that they prayed to the Father and not to Jesus, any more than I would want to be the one who attempts to prove that it was Jesus who they addressed in the prayer, as I do not think it to be a wise thing to do, based upon the lack of evidence.

Is there anything else you wish to defend at this time?

91. on 25 Sep 2010 at 10:13 pm⁹¹ *Doubting Thomas*

Marc,

You said, "I already cited Thayer that it is used epexegetically."

From what I understand your saying that Thayer believes that 'the treasures' are a further explanation (expexegesis) of 'wisdom and power' so the modifier 'all' used before the words 'the treasures', can just be moved to another part of the sentence and put in front of the words 'wisdom and power'.

Like I said in msg. #73, "I don't understand why you would think that quoting this other person's opinion would constitute a proof of some sort. I believe proofs come from God's word not from the opinions of people..."

You also said, "Cite a source (besides your own opinion) where it doesn't mean that Christ has all wisdom and knowledge in this passage."

I would rather just agree to disagree, but if you insist on me citing a source, then I cite my good friend Robert... 😊

92. on 25 Sep 2010 at 10:55 pm⁹² *Marc Taylor*

Hello Robert,

God can speak through David but David is never to be addressed in prayer. The Greek word for "show" is anadeiknumi and is used only one other time by the same author in reference to the Lord - and that "Lord" being the Lord Jesus (Luke 10:1).

93. on 25 Sep 2010 at 11:55 pm⁹³ *Ray*

I don't think it to be unusual if people speak to one they see or hear from. That seems to be the norm in this world. There are examples from scripture where people have seen or heard from the Lord Jesus and have responded by speaking to him. (I think of Saul on the road to Damascus and Stephen at his stoning)

I've heard that prayer is speaking to God, but I'm not sure if I should call all speaking to the Lord, prayer, though it could be called that. I think it could be a bit misleading. It might color the event in some kind of light that might cause another to get a bit off course. Yet, if a man see Jesus in a vision and he find himself speaking to him concerning what he saw, it can be just like a prayer, and I think we could call it that.

I've read or heard of some that have met people who have lived, and met them in a spiritual experience. One wrote of the experience and what was said between them.

Jesus spoke to Moses and Elijah during the time he was transfigured, but I wouldn't call that prayer.

It's true that we don't want to pray to David, but what if you were caught up to heaven, or experienced heaven in a dream or vision of some sort and in the experience met David. If he talked to you, would you respond by talking to him?

I wonder what I would do if I ever saw David in a vision. I suppose I would ask God the meaning of it. I suppose I would pray to God about it.

I prefer to not make a doctrine that says, "Because people have prayed to Jesus, and because some people do, and it's apparently OK to do so, it means that Jesus is God."

I certainly don't want to make up a thing like that and then work to defend it the rest of my life. What would be the point of that? I find things in scripture that I am amazed at and want to share with people, like isn't it something how nearly all that we read about that pertains to God in the Bible also pertains to Jesus? Maybe all that I have read about God in the Bible also pertains to Christ.

There's also so many things that we read of about David that pertains to the Lord Jesus.

So what should I say about these things? What can I say?

I can see Jesus as both God and the son of man.

I opened my Bible at random and my eyes fell upon Song of Solomon 5:5 which says "I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock."

A few verses later it says, "The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me."

I was thinking that some of us can relate to that as the church is likened to the woman in this book as it has been said.

94. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 12:01 am*⁹⁴ *robert*

Marc

If you wanted to be totally honest you would show the same word used for Lord in luke 10;1 is the same word used in these 3 verses translated master and certainly not refering to GOD OR JESUS

Luk 12:47

That 1 servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or do what his master asked 2 will receive a severe beating.

(0.50) Luk 16:5

So 1 he contacted 2 his master's debtors one by one. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

Joh 13:16

I tell you the solemn truth, 1 the slave 2 is not greater than his master, nor is the one who is sent as a messenger 3 greater than the one who sent him.

95. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 4:18 am*⁹⁵ *Marc Taylor*

The words eklegomai and anadeiknumi point to the fact that Luke meant the Lord Jesus is recipient of prayer in Acts 1:24 and thus the "heartknower" of all - which necessitates His omniscience (God).

96. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 9:27 am*⁹⁶ *Ray*

Marc,

Please explain in laymen's terms how it is that eklegomai and anadeiknumi can in no way allow for those who prayed to be praying either to God or Jesus without specifying which, if indeed they do.

I have no idea where those words are used in the scripture, nor the meaning of them. They are to me as sounding brass or a tinkling symbol.

I wouldn't be surprised if I was to look up the meaning of those words which appear to me to be greek, that I would find no such specification as you imply, and that a man could make the case well that those who were praying could have

been praying to either God or Jesus, and that Luke was not saying he knew for sure which one each of the men praying were specifically addressing.

Luke says “They prayed and said, Thou, Lord which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou has chosen,..”

Luke reports that the men prayed and what they said. Are you suggesting that if any man of the group prayed those words along with the rest of the group, that such a one could have no possible way have been addressing the Father?

This seems to me to be what you are attempting to prove. If so, please proceed using the evidence of the words you suggest.

97. on 26 Sep 2010 at 10:02 am⁹⁷ Frank D

I still find it very interesting that the trinity is not clearly stated in the word and as a result there is a piecing together of verses and definitions and opinions to stand upon. Someone is referred to as Lord and knowing the hearts of all men in Acts 1:24. Marc calls Jesus God because he claims Jesus is omniscience. Jesus says in Mark 13:32 only the Father knows the hour of the Messiah's return and the son does not. Marc calls Jesus God anyway. It is using vague verses to make a statement of omniscience and the clear verse is explained away as a dual nature of Jesus. Wave your hands and quote whomever you like. It is a double standard and dare I say, double minded.

98. on 26 Sep 2010 at 10:54 am⁹⁸ Ray

I was led to these verses:

John 14:13

John 15:16

John 16:23

I consider it a possibility that those praying in Acts 1:24 were doing that. I don't think it wise to try to prove otherwise as if they could not have been praying according to the above verses, for what would be the purpose of doing such a thing?

From what I can see, I don't think I would want to try to prove the men were praying to only God, or to only Jesus.

I've heard people pray and sometimes I can tell who they are praying to and sometimes I can't.

Acts 1:24 is one of those times when I don't know which the men prayed to for sure, God the Father, or Jesus, and it's not a matter of great importance to me.

99. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 5:50 pm*⁹⁹ Marc Taylor

Ray,

The fact tha kurios is used with these words that are associated with Christ elsewhere by the very same author (and never to the Father) is enough proof that “Lord” in this passage is in reference to Christ.

eklegomai is also used in Acts 1:2 in reference to Christ - the same would hold true concerning Luke 6:13.

anadeiknumi is used only one other time in the NT and that by Luke - and once again in reference to Christ (Luke 10:1).

Please supply the evidence that they were addressing the Father.

Frank,

In reference to Mark 13:32 please explain how Christ has a name that “no one” knows (Revelation 19:12).

100. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 6:38 pm*¹⁰⁰ robert

“anadeiknumi is used only one other time in the NT and that by Luke - and once again in reference to Christ (Luke 10:1).”

Marc

Can you explain the impossibility of these 2 words (anadeixon 1, anedeixen 1) being translated the same in these 2 verses.

I can, its a scribal error and should be this greek word

Results 1 - 1 of 1 for greek_strict_index:

deiknumi means show

1Co 12:31

But you should be eager for the greater gifts. And now I will SHOW you a way that is beyond comparison.

Funny thing the translators were able to use common sense to translate this properly

101. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 7:34 pm*¹⁰¹ Marc Taylor

Robert,

1. Scribal error? Evidence please.

2. You ignored eklegomai...in typical fashion.

3. The word ministry (diakonia) is also used in the prayer (cf. Acts 1:25). You can now go ahead and tell us who the “Lord” is that Paul received his “ministry” from as recorded in Acts 20:24.

102. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 7:36 pm* 102 *Danny Dixon*

What is it now that makes the resurrected glorified-again Jesus have a God?hat

Marc says that it is because Jesus is a man forever that he has a God NOW. Wouldn't it be easier just to say, “The man part of the God-man Jesus has a God. The God part doesn't”? I think the doctrine of the hypostatic union is ad hoc.

The best thing about a written debate, all things considered, is that people can re-read it, prayerfully, and hopefully be able to see clearly with the help of God's spirit.

103. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 7:37 pm* 103 *robert*

Marc you can see that these 2 words were not separated properly which is a minor mistake considering there are no breaks between words in greek, but if you separate them it makes perfect sense. It should read like this and totally blows your theory out of the water

And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, (BETWEEN,AMONG) shew() whether of these two thou hast chosen

GREEK kai

CONJ

proseuxamenoi
(5666)
V-ADP-NP

Meipan
(5627)
V-2AAI-3

Psu

P-2Ns

kurie

N-VSM

kardiognwsta

N-VSM

pantwn

A-GPM

ana

Definition: 1) into the midst, in the midst, amidst, among, between

deixon

from the root word deiknuo

Definition: 1) to show, expose to the eyes

2) metaph.

2a) to give evidence or proof of a thing

2b) to show by words or teach

on

R-ASM

exelexw

(5668)

V-AMI-2S

ek

PREP

toutwn

D-GPM

twon

T-GPM

duo

A-NUI

ena

A-ASM

104. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 7:39 pm*¹⁰⁴ *Marc Taylor*

Danny,
Scripture delcates it. Now whether you want to submit your so-called intellect to it is another story.

—
Robert,
That is rubbish. You keep ignoring my arguments.

105. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 7:40 pm*¹⁰⁵ *Ray*

Marc,

I don't have a clue as to what you are talking about in 99.

No doubt that Acts 1:24 may apply to Jesus just as so many scripture verses that speak of God also apply to him.

Is it your defense that the men could not have been praying to God the Father, the prayer of Acts 1:24?

106. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 7:43 pm*¹⁰⁶ *Marc Taylor*

I am saying the evidence that Christ is being prayed to in Acts 1:24, 25 is overwhelming. He thus is the heartknower which means He is omniscient - and that means God - despite Danny's made up definitions.

107. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 7:51 pm*¹⁰⁷ *Ray*

Marc,

In your opinion would it be wrong for men to pray to God the Father about such a thing they were doing as we read about in the later part of Acts 1?

It seems to me that you keep trying to prove they prayed to the Lord Jesus but provide no proof.

That Paul received his ministry directly from the Lord Jesus in not proof that the men prayed to Jesus in Acts 1:24. That should be clear to even a babe in Christ.

I don't know how a man could prove one way or another who it is that the men prayed to as to whether it was God the Father or the Lord Jesus, yet we seem to find some men willing to keep trying.

Do you have anything else at this time that you wish to prove?

108. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 8:02 pm*¹⁰⁸ *robert*

Marc

Your far fetched claim that makes no sense to start with just became a literal impossibility no matter how you twist it.

Throw some more out!

109. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 8:02 pm*¹⁰⁹ *Marc Taylor*

Ray,

I provide no proof?

No, you just don't want to accept the proof because heartknower (kardiognwstes) refers to an omniscent Being (God). Thus you and everyone else who denies Christ is God would have to admit your error as to who He really is.....but pride prevents that from happening.

Enough said here.

110. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 8:11 pm*¹¹⁰ *Ray*

Marc,

That you see scripture evidence which no man can dispute that shows that Jesus is prayed to and that his knowledge is not limited by any means of men, this has no bearing on the fact that it is impossible to prove if the men prayed to God the Father or to the Lord Jesus in Acts 1:24.

Here's how it works Marc, Can you accept as doctrine that they prayed to God the Father in Acts 1:24, if a man try to prove it by showing you as evidence, how many prayers are prayed to God the Father as compared to how many in scripture are prayed to Jesus?

My position is that no man can use scripture one way or the other to prove who the men prayed to in Acts 1:24. Do you think such a position to be fair and if not, and if not, please tell us why not.

111. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 8:37 pm*¹¹¹ *robert*

1. Scribal error? Evidence please.

Marc i proved that in post 103 showing you that ana(303) meaning between or among and deixon (1166) meaning show were just not separated when translated which makes it understandable how they can not be interchanged in the verses you say are connected.

Acts is translated SHOW and Luke is translated APPOINT which makes sense in both verses

2. You ignored eklegomai...in typical fashion.

No just know its Yahweh that knows the hearts of men and reveals that to whoever he wishes whenever he wishes

3. The word ministry (diakonia) is also used in the prayer (cf. Acts 1:25). You can now go ahead and tell us who the “Lord” is that Paul received his “ministry” from as recorded in Acts 20:24.

All things are giving by Yahweh but sometimes delivered by messengers like Jesus in the case of Paul.

112. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 8:52 pm*¹¹² Marc Taylor

Ray,

The Lord Jesus is called the Son of Man about 90 times in the Bible while he is referred to as the Son of David about 16 times. Do the 90 times cancel out the 16 times so that Christ is not really the Son of David? No.

Psalms 119:160 says the sum of God’s word is truth. Don’t pit Scripture against Scripture.

I have supplied plenty of evidence using anadeiknumi, eklegomai and diakonia that all point to the Lord Jesus being the “Lord” in Acts 1:24.

Here’s one more:

Apostleship (cf. Acts 1:25)

I am able to cite two passages where “apostleship” is specifically used in reference to the Lord Jesus (Romans 1:5 and 1 Corinthians 9:2). Can you cite a passage that clearly indicates otherwise.

113. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 9:35 pm*¹¹³ Ray

Marc,

You say a man should not pit scripture against scripture and I agree that scripture does not go contrary to scripture as a rule.

Therefore why is it that you refuse to see that a man can show many reasons why the men praying could have been praying to God the Father as something you are not willing to receive?

Is it scripture that prevents you from seeing that the men who prayed the prayer of Acts 1:24 could have indeed been praying to God the Father?

If so which scripture verse is it? We can look at each one at a time and apply the test of scripture to see if indeed they do prevent one from believing that the men may have been praying to God the Father as they prayed the prayer of Acts 1:24.

Is it any of the 90 scriptures you speak of that you say that calls Jesus the Son of man, and if so, which one? Is it all of the ninety and if so, why? Or, is it the 16 times Jesus is called the son of David you tell of? Which one of the 16 would say that the men who prayed the prayer of Acts 1:24 could not have been praying to God the Father? Is it all of them in your opinion? I don't see a one that would say such a thing or even lead a man to think of such a thing.

Or, is it Psalm 119:60 that you speak of? Is that the one that prevents you from seeing that the men who prayed the prayer of Acts 1:24 may have prayed to God the Father? If so, how? Please explain this to us.

Please tell us again how the words anadeiknumi, eklegomai, and diakonia prevent you from seeing that the men who prayed the prayer of Acts 1:24 could not have been praying to God the Father?

And here's one more, how is it that two or more verses that speak of apostleship, specifically referring to the Lord Jesus, (if indeed they do, for I say so because I haven't looked them up and therefore right now don't know what they say) would cause you to believe that the men who prayed the prayer of Acts 1:24 could in no way have been praying to God the Father?

Though they could have been praying to the Lord Jesus, isn't it possible that some could have been praying to God the Father instead? If not, why not? It seems to me that the men may have been praying to the Lord Jesus as well as to God the Father, for it seems to me that when men pray together, only the knower of the hearts would know such a thing.

I do not believe the scripture proves the men who prayed the prayer of Acts 1:24 prayed to Jesus and not to God the Father, nor do I believe the scripture proves they prayed to God the Father but not to Jesus. Do you think a man to be unfair to say so, and if so, why? What is your proof? What is your real evidence?

It seems to me that only the one who knows the hearts of men knows, and the rest of us should not try to prove it one way or the other as that information isn't clearly revealed by the scripture itself.

Is that fair and if not, why not?

1 Corinthians 1:1

Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and
Sosthenes our brother,

Marc as you see in above verse it was by the will of God Paul was called to be an
apostle not the will of Jesus

And in the verse below that Jesus was a chosen apostle himself

Hebrews 3:1

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle
and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

You case weaken by the day

115. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 9:50 pm*¹¹⁵ Ray

It seems to me that Paul was called to be an apostle by both the will of God and
by Jesus Christ.

116. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 10:15 pm*¹¹⁶ Marc Taylor

Robert,

What can't you see? I have supplied evidence from the words used within the
prayer that it is to the Lord Jesus.

What evidence that you have that this prayer is to the Father?

117. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 10:28 pm*¹¹⁷ robert

Marc

I have the whole bible as evidence, the words of Yahshua, Nowhere does it state to
pray to Yahshua but to ask Yahweh in his name. So unless you can provide some
honest evidence meaning absolutely clear then dont preach my way without
expecting to be corrected.

118. *on 26 Sep 2010 at 11:57 pm*¹¹⁸ Ray

It certainly looks to me like the writer of Acts (whom it seems to me to be Luke)
well reported the prayer of the apostles which they prayed (see Acts 1:24,25) and
left it up to the reader to decide if they prayed to God the Father or to the Lord
Jesus, or to both at the same time, and that we can trust that he that knows the
hearts of all men knows more about it than any of us, even more than Luke
himself.

I for one would not want to try to make the case as to whether it was the Father
they prayed to, or Jesus, or both, in any specific terms, but think it wise to let the

reader decide for himself, thereby letting the judge of the hearts of men be their judge and saviour by Jesus Christ.

And I think this is according to the mind of Christ. My case will rest and it will be judged by him.

119. *on 27 Sep 2010 at 1:24 am*¹¹⁹ *Marc Taylor*

Robert,

It doesn't have to state to pray to Jesus for we know it is proper to do so because those in Acts 1 did. I have cited plenty of evidence for anyone coming to Acts 1:24, 25 to conclude that it is to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, Christ can be the proper recipient of prayer based on several other passages as well (Acts 7:59, 60; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 12:8, etc.).

Indeed, He is the recipient of several doxologies (hymns of praise to God) in such passages as 2 Timothy 4:18; 2 Peter 3:18 and Revelation 1:6.

120. *on 27 Sep 2010 at 6:49 am*¹²⁰ *David*

I still don't see how prayer to Yeshua or his omnipotence (because of his authority given to him by the Father) has anything to do with anything. Perhaps this is because of my panentheistic view of our Father.

Firstly this is because YHVH is exalted above all of creation, back to a supreme state that is impossible to be equaled by any being. There is no way a drop of water (human) no matter how perfect (Jesus/Yeshua) could ever equate to the Ocean (The Father).

Given this view, the belief in the divinity or non-divinity of Jesus becomes completely irrelevant, as any possible concept of a "Triune Godhead" becomes completely dissolved. Although Jesus' perfect obedience to God and His will makes him "one" with the Father, we too are members of the same being. One's favored Christology becomes moot point at best as God is re-exalted to His rightful status of as infinitely greater, and all-inclusive; all of creation within His being, much like cells or members of a body (Or like a branches or leaves of a tree) God is still a complex unity, but he is still one. This beautiful unity also best illustrates the said "likeness" of the two commandments (Matthew 22:36-40), showing that they are not only similar, but practically identical.

This view of God has direct biblical passage support in both OT and NT of both implicit and explicit nature (Eph. 4.6, Col. 1-15-17, 2 Chr. 2:6, Ps. 19.1-2, Ps. 139.7-10, Jer. 23.24, Acts 17.28, 1 Jn. 4.16). This transparency of scripture is something that the Trinity doctrine lacks.

Not only is this view peace making and bridge-building between the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish faiths, it is also a worldview that is compatible with the rest

of the major faiths on Earth. It extends an olive branch to the entire world! Because of this, God is one God, He is the Only God, and there cannot possibly exist another. He is still God, and he is still one being, with one personality.

The theology is supported by Jewish rabbinic authority. (R. Cordozo, Israel ben Eliezer, Menahem Mendel). Rabbinic and Jewish literature have always proven indispensable in providing a great insights to the historical backdrop of Jesus' time. In this matter it becomes paramount. Although the Church is the most qualified source of information regarding Christology, the Jews are the most qualified and reliable source when it comes to the nature of God. Not only did the Messiah come from the Jewish people, the Jews have 3000 more years under their belt when it comes to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I would urge people to think on this as this view creates a middle ground where reconciliation can be made between Trinitarian and Unitarian if both can give a little. It isn't necessarily about re-evaluating our ideas about Jesus so much as it is about re-evaluating our understanding of God and His creation.

The benefit to the Trinitarian is that they can choose to maintain any Christology they want. They may choose to keep a Divine Jesus who is a part of God, who maintains himself as a complex unity. The Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit stay united together.

Unitarians get a God who is still one person, one being with one personality. A God who is infinitely supreme compared to Christ no-matter how you slice it. Jesus can in no way ever be equal to this God. God is back on the throne. Humankind is no longer "removed" from God, and also takes its place as within the tree of life, as disciples and subjects of Christ, and as brethren as well. Jesus is no longer removed from us existing in a triune Godhead separate from us. Each of us now have the ability to learn to be obedient to God and to also be one with God as Jesus was one with God. That is, after all, what being Christian is all about. It's about being a disciple. And discipleship is about becoming just like one's master.

All of Christianity (and the world) can benefit because of the shared concept of the being of God with other major world religions, opening up friendly dialogue and lines of communication through which the gospel can be preached and more readily accepted. No longer would others need to be "on the defense" when talking to Christians about theology, as they will be coming from the same point of reference when it comes to the idea of God. No longer will we be comparing idols to idols and have religious wars. After all, there is only one God, and He happened to be the God of the all nations all this time... humanity just didn't realize it until now. It's not about becoming completely syncretic and turning into a melting pot of inter-faith ideals. It's about finding common footing so that we can spread the gospel and open dialogue with the rest of the world.

We have the Gospel Message of God's Kingdom on Earth to spread, and while we are arguing about Christology we are missing the entire point. It's a great distraction from the real work in all actuality. The spiritual battle that plagues the world is out there, and we're in here arguing with each other. Reformation is an important and crucial step on the road to unifying the world under the banner of Jesus and the Father. However, I personally feel the battle between Unitarian and Trinitarian ideals will be best settled with a truce, such as I proposed above, or some other way. This is no black and white issue and some happy median will need to be arrived at lest this debate continue into perpetuity. Truces will have to be made all along the way, and allies will have to be made. I've chosen to forsake my hand-me-down ideals and instead seek the kingdom, to understand God's will, and to actively further God's plan for creation.

121. *on 27 Sep 2010 at 7:59 am* 121 robert

Marc

We don't know just how our prayers are delivered to God but considering the word angel means messenger and there has been only a few instances where messengers have delivered messages from God and there are at least 100 million messengers as defined in Revelation 5 :11 it is very possible that our prayers are delivered by angels.

So if you pray even to Jesus then maybe angels can still deliver that message but still we are not told anywhere to do this.

My hope is these prayers are still delivered for the sake of the deceived

122. *on 27 Sep 2010 at 6:53 pm* 122 Ray

Marc,

I don't know those greek words you gave us in 112, but today I thought maybe one of those words was Koinoneo or something.

I see that that word isn't one of those in 112.

But I do seem to recall a word I heard about from the greek and it's meaning in English is "full sharing".

Apparently that is not one of those words in 112, though the idea of full sharing is a good idea. The word I was thinking of has the idea of not holding anything back from another, but it's not about telling everything about political views, one's favorite color, or whatever is not of interest at the time to the person one is communicating with.

I would encourage you and all of us to do more full sharing in our communications.

I hope I haven't withheld any information from you which you would like to know from me in my communications with you, for if I do I might leave you

feeling like all you got from me is something very far short of a happy meal. If I do things like that, I would be getting into some works of the flesh which are evident to those who are walking by the spirit of God.

123. *on 27 Sep 2010 at 7:55 pm*123 *Marc Taylor*

Thank you Ray.

5 Questions for Danny to Answer (6a)

September 21st, 2010 by Marc Taylor

This is the eleventh post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



1. Only Master (Jude 1:4)

The NIDNTT reads: Belief in the one, only and unique God (Matt. 23:9; Rom. 3:30; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; Gal. 3:20; 1 Tim. 2:5; Jas. 2:19) is an established part of primitive Christian tradition (2:73, God - J. Schneider). Jude 1:4 teaches that “the uniqueness of God can be applied without qualification to Jesus” (NIDNTT 2:725, One - K.H. Bartels). Unique is defined as “existing as the only one or as the sole example; single; solitary in type or

characteristics” (Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary, page 1554) while qualification is defined as a “restriction” (page 1174).

In your 2nd Rebuttal you ignored commenting on Jude 1:4 despite the fact that it was in my 2nd Constructive #4. Can you please explain why you either agree or disagree that there is no restriction in that Christ shares in the “uniqueness” (singleness) of the “only one” God?

2. Lord of lords

The TDNT refers to this as Christ’s “divine equality” with God (TDNT 5:273, onoma) and Thayer cites both Revelation 19:16 and Deuteronomy 10:17 saying it refers to the “Supreme Lord” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, kurios, page 366). Supreme means “highest in rank or authority” (Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, supreme, page 1430). Therefore Christ is the “highest” Lord of heaven. The NIDNTT informs us that God “is the highest (Mk. 5:7; Lk. 1:32; Acts 7:48; 16:17; Heb. 7:1), the great king (Matt. 5:35), the king of the nations (Rev. 15:3)” (2:74, God - J.Schneider). This teaches us that God’s authority is absolute. The same would apply to Christ - “As God, Jesus exercises the divine authority, and he is head over every authority (Col. 2:10) (Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, page 47, Authority):

In your 2nd Rebuttal you ignored what I had written in my 2nd Constructive #3 which demonstrated that your appeal to Nebuchadnezzar as “king of kings” doesn’t apply. Can you please let us know if your Lord of all lords/Supreme Lord/Highest Lord in heaven is the Father or the Lord Jesus?

3. Creator

In your 2nd Rebuttal you ignored commenting on Job 9:8 even though it was in my 2nd

Constructive #4. Since you believe that the Father created the universe through the Son can you please explain why Job 9:8 teaches that God created the heavens alone?

4. Latreuw

You cite a source that says Adam receives latreuw. How can Adam 'properly' receive latreuw (worship) since unlike Christ he isn't able to hear/see all worship given unto Him (omniscience) and he isn't able to act on all this worship (omnipotence)?

5. Does omnipotent mean Almighty?

5 Answers for Marc (6b)

September 25th, 2010 by Danny Dixon

This is the twelfth post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



1. “Unique”

In 1 Corinthians 15:23-28, first, the Father who “subjected all things unto Christ” in the present *is excepted* from being made subject to Christ. Marc confusedly insists ed when he insists that exclusive terminology in the Scripture must stand “without qualification” in a context like Jude 4, when other biblical teaching does establish exceptions. All-inclusive language can be excepted (e.g. see marriage differences in Mark 10:12 and Matthew 19:9 defines

In one translation of Jude 4, there is a perfectly unique assignation of oneness as Master and Lord made to Jesus, this fact should not blind us to the fact that as true as that assignation is, it does not place the Messiah on an equal par with the Father who is to receive *emphatic* recognition when Christ will be publicly subjected to the one who subjected all things to Christ (1 Corinthian 15:28).

Not only this, but Mark does need to understand that scholars have acknowledged that Jude 4 can be translated as indicating a dichotomy between the one who is Master over the one who is Lord (This includes the scholars who translated the ASV: “denying the only Master, and our Lord Jesus Christ”; ASV, KJV). “Lord” or *kurios* in the passage, in Greek, scholars do admit that the word represents various degrees and titles of significance, (Shirley J. Case. “*kurios* as a Title for Christ,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 26 [1907], pp. 154, 159-160; E.g. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon*, pp. 261-262). The Father, who gave Jesus life (John 5:26; 6:57), *made* the Son to be Lord of heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18; Act 2:36; Daniel 7:14).

2. Lords

This is really Marc’s first question restated. When Marc said in his 2 Trinitarian Constructive that appealing to Nebuchadnezzar failed because “Nebuchadnezzar was not king of all other kings in that he ruled all other kings of the entire earth,” but Christ should be distinguished because he “rules with God in all of heaven,” something not true of Nebuchadnezzar’s supremacy, again, this was something already covered in establishing Jesus’ status as one given life by the Father (John 5:26; 6:57), where relationships are contextually defined. To call Jesus Lord of lords as if it meant that Jesus’ status as seated next to God meant that this was an eternal status of rulership that always existed is *not* what the Bible teaches. Marc fails to understand that he is contradicting himself to say that the Almighty has always existed and to maintain at the same time that

“The Father gave [omnipotence] to [Jesus]. If anyone has all power for any period of time then that necessitates they are Almighty (51 after your 2nd Trinitarian Constructive [4a]).

Actually, he reveals his complete belief in his 5b Answers, namely that “The Lord Jesus was, is and will always be omnipotent. He chose not to always use His ‘full power’ (omnipotence) during His earthly life. Refusal to employ ability does not necessitate inability.” Essentially, he believes that Jesus masked his divinity on the earth, that he was not really a man “made like his brothers in every way” (Hebrews 2:17) as if he was ever divested of divinity in becoming human. When I say, “Yes, the Lord of all lords/Supreme Lord/Highest Lord in heaven is the Father of the Lord Jesus,” I admit Marc’s said earlier statement when he said the Father gave Jesus All power. One moment before Jesus had all power (in being *givenit!*), he was *not* omnipotent; therefore at that moment he was *not* Almighty God.

That Jesus’ claim to be “one” with the Father (John 17:21-23) is a unity of *purpose* that even Christians are to have. Christians will be like Jesus is now when they “see him as he is” (See 1 John 3:1-2) does not suggest that Christian will *become Almighty God once, in seeing Jesus, they become “like him.”* To admit that God gave Jesus all authority and power is fatal to Marks case, which he cannot save by backtracking and saying that he didn’t really mean it, but that rather Jesus *chose not to always use* the full power, omnipotence, Almighty God-ness, that was eternally his.

3. God Alone Created (Job 9:8)

Marc’s perspective of how to read Scripture is is simplistic and ad hoc. In my first presentation, I mentioned 1 Corinthians 8:6, which says that all things are “of” (Greek ablative or genitive or origin *ek*) the one God the Father, but those things are also said to be “through” (Greek instrumental or dative of agency *dia*) the one Lord Jesus Christ.” I visited this idea early on in Comment 6 to your Rebuttal 1b:

Thayer . . . held, particularly regarding Jesus as the Logos in the first few verses of John 1 that the Logos (the Word) “is expressly distinguished from the first cause” (J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977 reprint], p. 133).

There should be clarity regarding the terms “first cause” and “absolute beginning.” But I think we can see what they mean especially if they use the two terms in the same citation. Thayer’s use of the term has Jesus the Logos existing apart from “the first cause,” which, in context, is the Father. Bitenhard, on the other hand uses the term in a different sense of the Logos as opposed to the Father who is “the absolute beginning.” He writes of the Logos or the Word as “in the strictest sense pre-existent before the world and so before time which begins with the world” (“Beginning” *_NIDNTT_I:166*).

The idea is that although God used an intermediary to create all things at the beginning, which is marked as at the beginning of time with the start of the world, he is still properly said to have created the world “alone.” Again, we should not forget how central the

concept of agency is. In this sense, God creates “through” the pre-existent Son, “through” whom and “for” whom all things were created (Colossians 1:16). The details are not explained in Scripture, but the truth is precisely laid out (See also Hebrews 1:2; John 1:2). Interestingly, I do not think Marc will differ with my *words*. He simply morphs Father and Son into a singular entity, although he will use the word “persons” as if that very technical theological word, which has no origin in the New Testament, should have been used by God to explain what he meant when he said the Father created alone, but the Father used the Word to do it. My understanding, which admits the logical existence of two separate entities, is understandable and does not violate the normal use of language.

4. Marc’s Confusion on Word Studies in Exegesis

John D. Grassmick *Principles and Practice of Greek Exegesis: A Classroom Manual* (1976, Dallas Theological Seminary) sets out basic question that exegetes should answer in interpreting scripture. They should ask how one is to determine the possible meaning of a word and “How do the New Testament authors use the word *in comparison* to the extra-biblical usage? What basic meanings have emerged?” Marc fails to understand that I am not suggesting that *latreuo* takes on a different meaning in *The Sibylline Oracles*. Marc’s confusion in his exegetical method is that he does not understand that the question at issue in discussing the word in that context is a *theological* matter, not a *lexical* matter, for the word means the same thing in both the NT as well as in that extra-biblical source. He asks the wrong question if he thinks I am suggesting that the *meaning* of the word has changed. Greek-speaking people knew how to use their own language. Scholarly analysis of the portion of *The Sibylline Oracles* which uses *latreuo* considers theologically how that service of worship could be applied to Adam.

The text referenced is not concerned with the hows or wherefores of the matter. Nor does it suggest that there must necessarily be omniscience and omnipotence for there to be *latreuo*. Even Marc admits that the word was used of pagan deities although none of them really existed since “God is one” (1 Corinthians 8:4). The proper questions, as Seeburg asks, are these: (1) If the word is used of pagan deities or of a man, how should that use be understood? Under what circumstances could a man receive *latreuo*? The answer is: (1) A man who had God’s specific blessing could. (2) A man in God’s image and character could. Jesus Christ fits the bill (Acts 2:22; 10:38; Philippians 2:6ff; Colossians 1:15).

5. Omnipotent = Almighty.

Yes. But the biblical phrase “all authority in heaven and on earth,” and similar terminology, is restricted with the exception that a created or life-given entity must ultimately be subjected to the Father, and is therefore *not* Almighty. The Son was never given power equal to the Father since the Son is a lesser lord (Hebrew *Adoni* (Psalm 110:1; 1 Corinthians 15:28).

65 Responses to “5 Answers for Marc (6b)”

1. *on 29 Sep 2010 at 9:10 am* David

I'm confused, Danny. In point #3 above are you now saying that Jesus was pre-existent and that the Father created the universe through him?

2. *on 29 Sep 2010 at 9:58 pm* Danny Dixon

Re 1:

David,

Yes.

This is not my language, but the language of the Scriptures in the passages that I cited above. As I noted, "The details are not explained in Scripture, but the truth is precisely laid out (See also Hebrews 1:2; John 1:2).

Danny

3. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 12:36 pm* David

The greek word "ποιέω" can be rendered many ways other than how it is typically understood in this passage as "Make or Create".

To produce, construct, form, fashion, etc.

To make ready, to prepare.

To produce fruit, bear, shoot forth

To acquire, to provide a thing for one's self

Constitute or appoint one anything, to appoint or ordain one that to make ready, and so at the same time to institute.

To perform: To a promise

It appears that Jesus then "made ready" or "prepared" the earth, or possibly acquired it (given the passage context and his heirship). This would make more sense since this passage appears to conflict with scripture which states that God created the world "alone".

I still don't understand from those passages how Jesus was pre-existent in any form other than in the plan of God. I understand that the word/logos existed before the world, as it was the very word of God that caused creation. The word "became" flesh and dwelt with us. After all John 1:18 goes on to describe Jesus as "Begotten". Acts 13:33 and Heb 1:5 tell us specifically when Christ was Begotten. (Not to be confused with conceived). Could you please elaborate how or where the scriptures say that Jesus is pre-existent in any other sense?

Thanks Danny. Shalom.

4. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 4:26 pm4 Anthony Buzzard*

Danny and others, The Trinitarian system aims to say that Jesus IS Yahweh. This however makes two Yahwehs since we all know the Father is Yahweh. Jesus' creed states this proposition "the Lord our God is ONE Lord." That statement counts the Lords as one single lord, "no one else except he" (=one single person).

Jesus is "my lord" and "our Lord" in NT parlance (cp. "David our lord," "lord Son of David") and we all should know that "my YHVH, our YHVH" is impossible and never appears in the OT.

As to preexistence, the term is a foggy word. You cannot logically preexist yourself and Matt and Luke are keen to tell us when, where, how and why the Son was fathered, begotten, brought into existence. If you are already in existence, you cannot be brought into existence. If you are already breathing, no one needs to make you breath. If you began to read this post today, you did not read it before that time. To beget is "to cause to exist," and no one can cause you to exist if you already exist.

Jesus is not human if he is pre-human.

Anthony

5. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 5:26 pm5 Michael*

Anthony writes- You cannot logically preexist yourself

Response... The wind ruffles the leaves of the date sapling in its planter, and Dr. Elaine Soloway quickly shields it. "There's only one plant like this in the world, and I'm still worried about it," she says. Methuselah – that is the sapling's name – is indeed unique. In 2005, Soloway, from Kibbutz Ketura in the Arava, germinated it from a 2,000-year-old date seed found at Masada.

For the past two millennia, since approximately the time of the Great Revolt of the Jews against the Romans, in 66-73 C.E., the seed lay dormant, until Soloway and her team breathed life into it, making it the oldest seed ever to germinate.

If you are born from seed you can logically pre-exist your birth.

6. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 6:47 pm6 Marc Taylor*

Anthony,

Several years ago I was in email correspondence with you and at that time you held that Christ is not nor should not be prayed to. If that is still your position now then why don't we have a debate about it?

Thank you

Marc Taylor

7. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 8:15 pm7 Doubting Thomas*

Michael,

You said, "If you are born from seed you can logically pre-exist your birth."

If Yeshua/Jesus was conceived from an ancient seed that went back to before the universe was created, how could he then be from the seed of David???

Did David also preexist in some form before the creation of the universe???

8. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 8:50 pm8 Randy*

This debate has been interesting, to say the least. But it would seem just as it has always been the past 2000 years, no minds were changed. Perhaps more questions looking for answers have been given birth. This point can be debated until the proverbial cows come home and I doubt if anyone's mind will ever be changed. So where do we go from here. Perhaps to believe that Jesus is truly the Son of God, He died and rose again by the power of God, He was and is the Messiah. Lacking in belief in that one must surely question their salvation.

9. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 9:42 pm9 Doubting Thomas*

Randy,

You said, "So where do we go from here. Perhaps to believe that Jesus is truly the Son of God, He died and rose again by the power of God, He was and is the Messiah."

You are of course correct. This, above all else, is the most important thing...

10. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 10:34 pm10 robert*

"Perhaps to believe that Jesus is truly the Son of God, He died and rose again by the power of God, He was and is the Messiah. Lacking in belief in that one must surely question their salvation. "

Randy

All these things are very important, but to say that someone lacking that belief is questioning their salvation is a very unchristian statement. This implies that salvation can be earned by knowing something when it is actually based on what type of person you are. If you possess the morals that Jesus taught why would he not confess you before the Father. Your statement condemns BILLIONS of People who possess qualities that most christians today deny. You also deny salvation to children that died before knowing or hearing God.

When God created Mankind he stated it was Very Good yet none of the things above existed.

This must mean they were morally acceptable to God which means these morals

must be instilled in the creation of mankind.

Now if its entering the Sabbath Rest than all these things are a must but this is a different promise than the Salvation to the multitude of the Moral.

11. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 11:48 pm* David

Micheal,

You stated above in your response to Anthony “If you are born from seed you can logically pre-exist your birth.” I do not understand how this can possibly apply. Jesus is a human being and was the “Seed of Avraham”. It makes no sense that Jesus pre-existed in the form of a seed. Surely “the” seed was not a little swimmer in Abraham’s body. He could just as equally so, been said to have pre-existed in Mary’s ovaries as an egg.

Randy,

I agree with DT, that what you stated above is of central importance, and other topics begin to look like moot points at best. However I agree with Robert. Our redemption was purchased for us by the blood of Messiah. However Jesus himself stated that the requirement for those of us who want to enter the kingdom of God are to obey God’s commands... not weather we accept a doctrine or not.

12. *on 04 Oct 2010 at 11:56 pm* Doubting Thomas

Robert,

You said, “This implies that salvation can be earned by knowing something when it is actually based on what type of person you are. If you possess the morals that Jesus taught why would he not confess you before the Father.”

You are of course correct. I was wrong in msg. #9 where I mistakenly said, “This, above all else, is the most important thing...” The most important thing is how we treat each other, our behavior. I do not believe in orthodoxy, where we are all saved by our doctrines. I believe in orthopraxy, where we are all saved by our behavior.

Like Yeshua/Jesus said in Mathew 25:31-40 when he talks about the Final Judgment, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”

In these passages Yeshua/Jesus talks very clearly about what standard he will use when he is judging us. Everything he talks about in these passages, involves actions that people did or didn’t do during their lifetimes. In other words - “How we treated each other!!!” - Especially the least of these my brothers.

Thank-you for reminding me of this, which above all else, is the 'MOST' important thing. At least that's the way I see it anywaze...

13. *on 05 Oct 2010 at 12:14 am* 13 Mark C.

I do not believe in orthodoxy, where we are all saved by our doctrines. I believe in orthopraxy, where we are all saved by our behavior.

I don't believe the Bible makes such a division. It tells us that **both** believing the Gospel **and** living in light of it are the keys to eternal life.

14. *on 05 Oct 2010 at 2:23 am* 14 Jaco

Michael,

If you are born from seed you can logically pre-exist your birth.

Did you pre-exist your physical birth here on earth? I know Mormons (and others) believe they did.

Seeing that the metaphor you're using is very uniquely applied (the very long time factor), what in our Christian life would be symbolised by the seed-bearer (or seed-source) being watered and taken care of?

Marc,

I agree with your statement. I think that way too many people fall into the oft-encountered trap of deciding for our Judge, Jesus Christ, on how he will judge mankind. We tend to start doing the judging ourselves. The most notorious judges throughout the centuries were the hybrid "Christian" Church. Many of their pillars were murderers themselves, and yet, the gullible and faithful churchgoer would hear how their minister denounce Islam for doing the very same thing 😊 Classical example of the one judging being guilty of his very own judgment...

We should steer away from deciding for Jesus on how individuals will be judged. We have a responsibility NOW, and that is to seek for truth. Also to live the truth. Both what we believe and what we do will be considered by our Judge (Joh. 3:19, 36; 1 Tim 2:3, 4). How he will judge those believing differently is none of our business, since Jesus alone (not us) have access to the highest of heavenly councils (cp. John 3:13). Although this does not remove from us our responsibility to seek, live and proclaim the truth, it does strip us from our self-appointed status as judge of others.

Regards,

Jaco

15. on 05 Oct 2010 at 4:53 am David

Marc,

Yes the bible does tell us that belief/faith is important, but I don't see why it is so hard for people to use a little critical thinking to figure out where the clear distinction is.

I've said time and time again that many christians seem to think that belief or faith in the gospel has to do with weather or not one thinks it is true or not; as if during judgement day Jesus is going to use His magic "believe-o-ray" to find out what we "think" about doctrinal matters. Or as to what our "convictions" are.

The bible clearly says we will be judged by our works. Jesus said one can tell a tree by it's fruit. That we cannot deny. But where in here does "faith" or "belief" apply?

There are three progressions faith (in regards to Jesus and God) takes as it qualifies itself through each phase.

These phases are:

1. Existence ——— 2. Qualification ——— 3. Decree ——— 4. Promise

We know that the bible progressively reveals God and our Messiah following this scheme. In sequence we see Scriptures explain that God exists. We then see a demonstration of what God's qualifications are. We are then told what it is that God wants from us. We are then told what we will receive if we do or don't follow this plan.

The exact same outline is followed with Jesus/Yeshua. We are told of his existence by reading scripture. We then receive many narratives identifying him as Messiah, with authority, with cross-reference to relevant passages. Next the bible tells us what it is that Jesus wants from us. Finally we are told what it is that will happen if we do or do not follow what it is that we are told.

If one has faith in and through all 4 of these progressions/points, we arrive at obedience. Which is the final goal and the purpose of our faith. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith.

If I believe he exists, then I'm lead to learn who the bible says he is. If I have faith in that, I then have faith in what he is saying. If I have faith in what he is saying, I will DO it... thus faithfully awaiting the promise.

The book of James says over and over again, "Faith without works is dead".

Jesus himself said: Not all who call me “lord” shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but rather them that DO my commandments. He gave strict warnings of those who “hear” but do not do. When asked point blank “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” he answered with the parable of the good samaritan. Another perfect illustration (Straight from our author and finisher Jesus!) that God is concerned not with religious conviction, but with our obedience to the command to love one another. Our faith is expressed by acts of righteousness and good works. Our salvation from death was a gift of grace, and that was expressed by Jesus’ substitutionary death and sacrifice as the first-fruits of the human race. This two-tiered sacrifice both atoned for us who would be deemed dead by stipulations of the older covenant, and brought us into right standing with God Himself, redeeming us to him.

If one does not have faith in Jesus, they can never foster the fruit of obedience. If one does not have faith in Jesus, they do not believe he is the truth. If he is not the truth then the teachings and commandments he gave us aren’t important. If they aren’t important then we can really just do what we want.... see where this goes?

Without faith, there is no obedience, which is the reason for having faith in the first place.

16. *on 05 Oct 2010 at 5:03 am*¹⁶ *David*

Pardon me... “Obedience” is not the absolute final goal. The absolute final goal is the “Promise”. Faith leads to Obedience which leads to the fulfillment of the “Promise.”

Shalom

17. *on 05 Oct 2010 at 7:31 am*¹⁷ *Michael*

Thomas writes... If Yeshua/Jesus was conceived from an ancient seed that went back to before the universe was created, how could he then be from the seed of David???

David writes... You stated above in your response to Anthony “If you are born from seed you can logically pre-exist your birth.” I do not understand how this can possibly apply. Jesus is a human being and was the “Seed of Avraham”. It makes no sense that Jesus pre-existed in the form of a seed.

Response... Human birth and birth from God are not the same event as Nicodemus pondered, so questions pertaining to “Seed of David” and “Seed of Avraham” speak to the human birth of Jesus.

Those that are born of God are born from incorruptible seed by the word of God, this is when one becomes able to begin receiving and understanding the things of

the Spirit of God. This is why when Jesus was a child and his parents could not find him Jesus was in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary (Luke 1:35) and was then born from God in the womb of Mary (Matthew 1:20) and these are not the same event.

If Jesus had committed a sin during his life then just as the first Adam he would have died that very day by not being able to keep the seed from God, a condition not applicable to present day believers. (1John 3:9)

When one born of God dies and is resurrected the seed from God is sown, it is not the dead body that is reanimated (1Corinthians 15:35-38) and given eternal life but the seed from God contains the new life and body.

Jesus is not an adopted son of God as are all others born of God; he is the Son of God by virtue of the seed he received from God.

This is why John proclaimed of the risen Jesus "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.

18. on 05 Oct 2010 at 7:50 am18 robert

"I don't believe the Bible makes such a division. It tells us that both believing the Gospel and living in light of it are the keys to eternal life. "

Mark

Everytime someone comes to preach the Commandments of God ,you preach a distinction that seems to show there is a different message preached to the Gentiles.

There is no way these 2 gospels can pertain to the same promise. If they did i would have to Say that following OT law has the greatest authority because Jesus almost completely preached this and Many NT writers also preached this. Now Paul seemed to have preached both depending upon who he was addressing.

There are 3 groups the gospel were preached to,the jews,the lost sheep of Israel amongst the gentiles and the gentiles.

Mark you and Matthew Jansen done a great job showing me how there was 2 gospels , Now if both of you could see yourselves

19. on 05 Oct 2010 at 10:38 am19 Mark C.

everytime someone comes to preach the Commandments of God ,you preach a distinction that seems to show there is a different message preached to the Gentiles.

There is no way these 2 gospels can pertain to the same promise.

I never said there were two gospels. I said there were two covenants - the Old and the New. The New Testament presents one Gospel for the whole world: that of the coming Kingdom of God. Jesus preached it, his disciples preached it, and Paul preached it throughout Acts and in his epistles. But my point was that the Bible does not make a division between doctrine and practice, or state that one is more important than the other. If we believe the Gospel we will live accordingly, and bear fruit in our lives.

20. *on 05 Oct 2010 at 5:22 pm20 robert*

“But my point was that the Bible does not make a division between doctrine and practice, or state that one is more important than the other.”

Mark

I never said that you said there was 2 gospels. I said that when someone comes to preach the Commandments of God which is one Gospel, You preach a different gospel.

It took me awhile to see that the gospels You and Matthew preach are 2 separate Gospels with 2 separate PROMISES.

I actually stated you can only see one of the Gospels,dont know how you read it as I said you could see 2 Gospels.

Yes there is a clear cut division between doctrine and practice.

As i said if there was only one gospel then what Matthew preached would carry more authority than the one you preach because Jesus and Most of the NT writers Have more authority than Paul.

Paul’s message needs to be taken in context of what group he was addressing,And when that is done there is no more contradictions.

21. *on 05 Oct 2010 at 6:13 pm21 Doubling Thomas*

Micheal,

You said, “Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary (Luke 1:35) and was then born of God in the womb of Mary (Mathew 1:20) and these are not the same event.”

Luke 1:35, “And the angel answered her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy — the Son of God.’ ..”

Mathew 1:20, “But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.’..”

What your saying doesn't match what is being said in the above passages. Both of these verses appear to be talking about the same thing. Yeshua/Jesus being conceived by the Holy Spirit. I don't know where you got your theory from, but from looking at these two verses, it certainly appears that it did not come from these verses...

22. on 06 Oct 2010 at 7:06 am22 David

Micheal,

Ok, I get what you are saying, but I have to disagree with you where you said “If Jesus had committed a sin during his life then just as the first Adam he would have died that very day by not being able to keep the seed from God, a condition not applicable to present day believers. (1John 3:9)”

This is not possible and is not even biblical.

Hebrews 5:5-10 states that Jesus **learned obedience**, and became perfect. The NT announces his sonship on two separate occasions. 1) His Baptism by John. 2) We are told it was completed through his resurrection. (Also see Hebrews 12:6,7)

In order for one to learn obedience to God, they must know disobedience God. It is utterly impossible for one to even be **MARGINALLY** disobedient to God and remain sinless. Jesus was “perfected” he was not perfect.

Luke 2:40, 52

40 And the Child (Jesus) grew and **became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom;** and the grace (favor) of God was upon Him. ... 52 And Jesus **increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God** and men.

According to this there was a point in Jesus' life where he was not as wise as he was during his ministry and not as strong in spirit either. It even states that he **GAINED** favor with God.

Hebrews 1:4 NKJV

4 having **become** so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Hebrews 7:28 NKJV

28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who **has been perfected** forever.

Many people who hold the “eternally immaculate” Jesus doctrine forget these parts of their bible. Was Jesus perfect? No, but he was made perfect at a specific point in time - according to the bible.

This is why he was led into the wilderness to be was tempted. To see if he was finally ready to begin his ministry and to be the sinless sacrifice. He was human just like any of us. If he were NOT human he would not qualify as a first-fruits sacrifice for the redemption of mankind.

If he was always perfect then he would not be human, if he was not human, he couldn't be tempted and God has a bad sense of humor. If this is the case than there would be no need for discipleship as it would be an impossible goal. The goal of discipleship is to become exactly like the master.

There are 30 years of the life of Jesus that are completely unaccounted for. It would be completely ludicrous to assume he didn't get into any trouble at some point in time. Does a child get greedy? Does a teenager have impure thoughts or sass his elders?

The religious “leadership” of his day knew who he was. He was little “Yeshy” from down the street. “Isn't THIS the son of Mary?”. They didn't call him Yeshua ben Joseph. They addressed his lineage maternally. 2000 years ago in the hebrew world this is the same as calling someone “Mary's illegitimate bastard kid”. They had their own reasons to doubt him and I'm sure it was based upon some personal frame of reference. Given the fact that the bible states Joseph wanted to keep this a secret, I wonder how people found out. Did Joseph leak? Did Mary tell Jesus, and then Jesus told his friends, and then his friends told their parents, and ... You get the point. The fact is things go on behind the scenes of what is written in the bible that we are not privy to, and we must take that into account to be as objective as possible.

This is the stuff that makes me want to vomit, it's the stuff people use as a cop-out for when they mess up because they believe that perfect obedience like Christ is utterly impossible for mere humans. It's not impossible, it's just really - really - hard!

Jesus is the perfect Prototype for man. Discipleship and obedience is what being a Christian is all about. The fact that Jesus did it and encourages us to pick up our own cross and follow him is encouraging. The fact that he was one of us, a human, and that he did what he did gives us hope even though what he did seems to be impossible!

100% always sinless Jesus = Unbiblical. I suspect it has it's origins in Trinitarian doctrine. It would be interesting to learn more on this topic.

100% always sinless Jesus = Unbiblical.

I have to disagree.

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

John 8:29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

This is the stuff that makes me want to vomit, it's the stuff people use as a cop-out for when they mess up because they believe that perfect obedience like Christ is utterly impossible for mere humans. It's not impossible, it's just really - really - hard!

I have to strongly disagree with you here. In fact it's this attitude in some Christians that makes *me* want to vomit. Jesus taught that thinking evil was as sinful as murder; that looking on a woman with lust is as sinful as adultery. This is the whole reason why Jesus came to pay for our sins. All have come short, all have sinned. We are saved by grace through faith, not by works lest any man should boast.

The fact that he was one of us, a human, and that he did what he did gives us hope even though what he did seems to be impossible!

On the contrary. It is his Good News about the Kingdom that gives us hope. We are all sinners and don't deserve anything God offers, and yet He makes it available by grace. It is the Father's good pleasure to give us the Kingdom.

24. on 06 Oct 2010 at 8:34 am24 robert

"Does a teenager have impure thoughts or sass his elders?"

David

Considering there was never a sacrifice needed for children means sin was accounted for children.

This makes sense when we take into account that if Jesus wasn't a child when his Father and Mother found Him in the temple his disrespect would of been a great sin, my bet is Joseph wore out his backside for this disrespect.

We also find many spoke of as righteous to God according to the Law.

So There is basis for your belief

25. on 07 Oct 2010 at 1:10 am25 David

Marc,

The hope I'm talking about has nothing to do with what you are talking about. I'm not talking about the hope we have in the Gospel or the Kingdom message. I'm not talking about Grace. Those are things already established. I'm talking about the hope man actually has since he has been fashioned with the capability to grow to be perfected in Christ.

I'll have to agree to disagree with you on this point. The basis that Jesus was perfected as a process has stronger biblical support. Not only are there passages that state so, but the entirety of the Bible lends itself as the entire basis for a human Jesus capable of sin or disobedience. Why would God lead Jesus in the wilderness to be tested if he had been **PASSING** that test his entire life? Why does the bible say that God had to teach him obedience, and only after that point was he made perfect?

If it were not possible, then why would Christ ask us to be perfect as he is perfect? Why would he wish us to become one with the Father as he is? Why would he say that we would come to do greater things? Why would we conform our selves to Christ? To what "end?"

Of course we need grace and mercy. Of course ALL have fallen short of the glory of God. But do we really expect the entire world to be living in a state of sin and forgiveness for perpetuity? At what point does man learn obedience or be made to be obedient? Do we just wake up one day in the world to come and suddenly have absolutely no will to sin at all, just mindlessly righteous with no free will? Or maybe we just live like sinners the whole time and Jesus just continually forgives us for eternity? Is that where is this going? At what point do we become perfected? I understand we are made righteous through grace. I am not talking about right standing with God by man's merit, that's impossible as all our righteousness are just filthy rags. I'm talking about obedience, these are two very different things. I never said obedience put us into right standing with God, only Grace can do that. Salvation is a gift. If it's earned then it's works.

This is all in the bible in black and white. Jesus was NOT always perfect in God's eyes. I don't see what is so hard about it except that it puts the Trinity on it's head since the bible says Jesus wasn't always perfect in the eyes of God. I guess that kinda ruins the whole "Jesus=God" argument, since it requires a non-biblical pre-existent eternally sinless Jesus; a phantom that only existed in the minds of members of the pagan influenced early Church. I guess they can't have one member of the "godhead" be disobedient to himself because it wouldn't do any good to have a theology which made God into a schizophrenic.

The bible needs to be read plainly in it's textural and historical context. It needs to be checked against the weight and overall backdrop of the rest of the bible, precept upon precept to see if it's interpretation is cohesive to the rest. This is especially so if there is a perceived contradiction of passages that arise from any given interpretation. This is a form of biblical study and interpretation that

Trinitarians have clearly thrown out the window and I just don't understand why. The Bible has the uncanny ability to interpret itself.

Anyhow, I'm sorry for rambling and I hope I did not offend you. I appreciate you sharing your views. God Bless.

26. on 21 Oct 2010 at 4:31 am²⁶ Mary

I like to think that the true nature of God is a mystery that is revealed to each of us rather than deduced. Personally, I always have and always will believe in One God - a Triune God - God the Father, Jesus Christ & the Holy Spirit - 3 distinct yet inseparable. This is a beautiful mystery to me... is beyond definition or comprehension. I'm a lot better off and happier embracing it and not so much debating it. Suffice it to say IMHO: Trinitarianism is Monotheism:

- 1.The Father is God
- 2.The Son is God
- 3.The Holy Spirit is God
- 4.The Father is not the Son
- 5.The Son is not the Holy Spirit
- 6.The Holy Spirit is not the Father
- 7.There is only one God

I have no plans now, in the near or distant future to attempt to try and figure any of this out 😊

Peace!

27. on 21 Oct 2010 at 6:06 pm²⁷ Doubting Thomas

Mary,

You said, "I like to think that the true nature of God is a mystery that is revealed to each of us rather than deduced."

I agree, but I also believe it is revealed to us as we study the scriptures.

You also said, "IMHO: Trinitarianism is Monotheism:

1. The Father is God
2. The Son is God
3. The Holy Spirit is God
4. The Father is not the Son
5. The Son is not the Holy Spirit
6. The Holy Spirit is not the Father
7. There is only one God"

I agree with all of the above except for point #2 and point #3. I can understand how some people might believe the Son is God, since there are some vague

references (which I believe are simply not interpreted properly by Trinitarians), but I don't understand how anyone can believe the Holy Spirit is God. Not only is there not even a vague reference in the scriptures that says this, there is not even the slightest hint anywhere (that I am aware of) that says anything even remotely close to the Holy Spirit being God.

I guess it all boils down to if you want to get your beliefs from the bible or if you want to get your beliefs from the traditions of men (in particular from the early Roman Catholic Church of the late 4th century). Don't get me wrong. I have nothing against Trinitarians. All of my family and friends are Trinitarians (at least the Christian ones anywaze).

I just decided to study the bible with an open mind, eliminating all my preconceptions, and eventually came to my Socinian/Unitarian beliefs that I have today. At the time I came to these beliefs I didn't even know what the word Unitarian meant, never mind what the word Socinian meant. It took several years before I finally found out that there were these people called Socinians that shared my beliefs.

I would like to thank you for your peaceful and respectful e-mail. It is very refreshing. Most Trinitarians that we get, come on to this site saying that we are all going to go to hell in a handbasket (or words similar to that). I don't think they even realize how un-Christian their behavior is. I certainly don't believe that people that have beliefs that are different from mine are going to be condemned just because of their doctrines.

May the peace of God be with you and with all of us, and may we all be united in love, together with our Heavenly Father and His Son the Messiah Yeshua/Jesus...

28. *on 21 Oct 2010 at 8:32 pm* 28 Ray

Thomas, do you believe that people can be salt or the light of the world ? (Matt 5:13,14)

Whenever I hear the term "God the Son" in a sermon, I find myself translating it to "The Son of God." I suppose it's because of the word I have received and it's how I think.

When I hear Hebrew words for God or Jesus, I also have to translate them in my mind before I know who they're talking about because I don't think like a Jew. I wasn't brought up that way. I am a gentile who came to Christ after hearing the gospel.

I wonder if Trinitarians translate the term "The Son of God" into "God the Son" every time they hear it. I doubt it, but can't say for sure because I don't know how they think. I only know the words they often use.

Just because I get familiar with the words they use doesn't mean I know the way they think, though I have found myself saying, "I don't think like you", or "I don't think the way they do. "

I believe I have the liberty to describe Jesus as "God" or as "Being God". There are so many scriptures that apply to Jesus that are speaking about God.

I found some in Psalm 46.

I ask the readers here to read Psalm 46 and ask yourself how many verses of this psalm can be read to apply to Jesus in some sense?

Can you be still and know that Jesus is as God is?

Can you be still and know that for all practical purposes (discern what I say here) that Jesus is God.?

Can you do this without making a doctrine or formula out of it?

It's good for a man to notice where he finds his peace concerning spiritual matters and to know who the prince of peace is.

Sometimes I wonder if it makes good sense for me to argue with a Trinitarian who says that the Father is not the Son, and try to defend the position that in many ways the Father is as Jesus is, because Jesus is as God is, and on that basis tell them that I don't necessarily agree with that statement.

Isn't the Son the same as the Father? I can tell of many ways in which he is. And as the Son is the same as the Father, doesn't it follow that the Father is in many ways as the Son? Isn't he in many ways the same as his own Son whom he has begotten?

Yet I know that fathers in this world don't show respect for their son the same way that a son should show respect for his father.

Though the father of a son in this world will respect his son, that respect doesn't show itself in the same way that his son's respect should be shown to him.

A father and a son may be in many ways very much the same in this world.

I am aware of the distinction between Jesus and God, but I also want to see Jesus as he really is today, being as God is, being full of the glory of God, being filled with the power and presence of God, being over all the angels of God, being the captain over all the host of God. (see Psalm 46:11)

29. on 21 Oct 2010 at 9:41 pm29 Doubting Thomas

Ray,

I believe that some people can be the salt AND ALSO the light of the world. Yeshua/Jesus tells us in Mathew 5:14 that, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." We should not hide our light under a bushel, but put it out there for the whole world to see.

I also think that being the salt of the world had more of a meaning in biblical times than it does today. In biblical times salt was very very valuable. From what I understand, at one time salt was more valuable (by weight) than gold or silver. So by saying that we are the salt of the world, it would not have just been talking about the usefulness of salt, but it would also have implied that we (the children of God) are also the most valuable things in the world (at least in God's eyes).

I also understand what you mean when you say, "Can you be still and know for all practical purposes that Jesus is God." We have had this conversation before. It is just plain common sense that the right hand of God, for all practical purposes, is God. Of course that doesn't change the fact that the right hand of God is subordinate to God, and is not actually God.

I read Psalm 46 and couldn't see any verses that directly applied to Jesus except perhaps like you mentioned Psalm 46:11. Like you said Yeshua/Jesus, as God's right hand, would be the captain over all the hosts of God. But that's alright that we don't see everything the same. God made us all to be different from one another. I'm sure you can see some things that I can't see, just as I can see some things that you can't see.

I don't think it is that important that we agree on every detail. I think it is more important for us to just share what we see with each other, and let God move each one of us as He sees fit. God created us as individuals so he could love each one of us in his own way.

At least that's the way I see it anywaze...

30. on 21 Oct 2010 at 10:28 pm30 Doubting Thomas

Robert,

I was just wondering if you could tell me what the word 'Selah' means. I noticed that Psalm 46 is suppose to be a song. Since it is repeated over and over again throughout this chapter, I'm thinking it might mean 'Chorus'. I don't know if you know or not...

31. on 21 Oct 2010 at 10:40 pm31 robert

Thomas

In the Targums it means always, but all other translations just transliterate not translate

32. on 22 Oct 2010 at 8:48 am³² Ray

This gets interesting when I consider that Jesus is the right hand of God, that he is the arm of the Lord God, and that it's been said that "God has no hands but our hands." (meaning that we are his workers upon this earth to do his will by his help and guidance)

Here's one of those verses from Isaiah:
45:12

I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

When I change a tire I will use my arm and my hands, but when asked if I had any help, I might say that I did it by myself. It seems that I need not mention that my hands and my arm was with me.

33. on 22 Oct 2010 at 9:37 am³³ Mary

T: "I agree with all of the above except for point #2 and point #3."

M: 2 out of 7 ain't bad. In fact that makes you a 5-point Trinitarian!

T: "I can understand how some people might believe the Son is God, since there are some vague references (which I believe are simply not interpreted properly by Trinitarians), but I don't understand how anyone can believe the Holy Spirit is God."

M: I try not to put too much stock in what I can or don't understand. My faith has to be higher than my understanding or I'm doomed.

T: "Not only is there not even a vague reference in the scriptures that says this, there is not even the slightest hint anywhere (that I am aware of) that says anything even remotely close to the Holy Spirit being God."

M: You've got to be kidding, right?

T: "I guess it all boils down to if you want to get your beliefs from the bible or if you want to get your beliefs from the traditions of men (in particular from the early Roman Catholic Church of the late 4th century)."

M: For me it boils down to prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit's illumination of my heart and mind when I study the Bible.

T: "I just decided to study the bible with an open mind, eliminating all my preconceptions, and eventually came to my Socinian/Unitarian beliefs that I have today."

M: I decided to study the bible with total reliance on the Holy Spirit to Divinely ILLUMINATE as I study? It is the kind of ILLUMINATION that is wedded to reading, studying and exegeting the Scriptures using tried hermeneutical principles upon the text to reach its proper meaning. As I am ILLUMINATED I am guided into the truth of the Word. Without ILLUMINATION from the Holy Spirit I cannot understand the Word of God.

I think our ability to properly interpret scripture is directly proportional to the degree of ILLUMINATION by the Holy Spirit who does the interpreting for us.

I think if we rely on the Holy Spirit's ILLUMINATION then we will not rely so much on our own rationalizations and understanding to explain scripture.

34. *on 22 Oct 2010 at 9:51 am*³⁴ Mary

T: "...there is not even the slightest hint anywhere (that I am aware of) that says anything even remotely close to the Holy Spirit being God."

M: can you think of any hints anywhere that I might be aware of? can you think of any verse anywhere in the Bible that I might think comes even remotely close to proving the Deity of the Holy Spirit?

35. *on 22 Oct 2010 at 9:56 am*³⁵ Mary

T: "I agree with all of the above except for point #2 and point #3."

M: I meant to say: "5 out of 7 ain't bad! In fact that makes you a 5-point Trinitarian!"

36. *on 22 Oct 2010 at 10:05 am*³⁶ robert

"This gets interesting when I consider that Jesus is the right hand of God"

Ray

Not sure where you developed the understanding that Jesus is the right hand of God.

I find it is said that He now sits or stands there, but also i find he sits at the right hand of God's throne, does that make Jesus just part of the throne which God sits on? David was also spoke of as being sat to the right hand of God. I think God's appointed Kings of Israel were to sit at the right hand of God but only find that David and Jesus were the only ones that remained in the position of authority with Jesus receiving his eternal honor after his resurrection. David will sit to the right hand of Jesus as the earthly king while Jesus will rule as the King of Kings from the right hand of God in heaven while God rest his Sabbath for 1000 years then after he will return that power back to God at the end.

37. on 22 Oct 2010 at 10:08 am³⁷ Frank D

2Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2Peter 1:20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

Unfortunately, Mary, your comments are not based upon anything written in God's word. I am not trying to be harsh but very direct, so please understand. If we are all to get our understanding of God's word from spiritual influences (i.e.: Holy Spirits ILLUMINATION) then those without a strong foundation in God's truth will easily be lead astray. If that is how we are to interperate scripture then we will end up with hundreds, no THOUSANDS, of Christian denominations.

Please review the articles posted on this blog site. They address many of the issues you raise in your post. They are well studied and scripturally backed responses to the false doctrine of the trinity. Ask questions of the authors. They are humble, approachable and eager to share additional thoughts and insight. I pray these articles provide additional ILLUMINATION into the subject of who God is and what his plan is for mankind. They will, IMHO, clearly show what God intended us to do: STUDY his word to find the truth!

God Bless.

38. on 22 Oct 2010 at 10:32 am³⁸ Mary

F: "Unfortunately, Mary, your comments are not based upon anything written in God's word."

M: Actually my comments are based solely and entirely on God's word 😊

"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14

39. on 22 Oct 2010 at 11:12 am³⁹ Mary

Frank, honestly I found your response to my post surprisingly over the top and somewhat mean-spirited unlike the response I got from "doubting thomas". You actually helped make my point about the need for us to rely on the Holy Spirit (3rd person of the Trinity) for interpretation of Scripture... but also for other stuff like equipping us with traits that equip us to deal with others who disagree with us in a Christ-like manner.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” (Galatians 5:22)

40. on 22 Oct 2010 at 11:44 am⁴⁰ Sean

Mary,

In what way was Frank's post mean-spirited? He was very cordial. Please refrain from accusing him or his motives. Please limit your focus to his actual comments.

thanks,

~Sean (moderator)

41. on 22 Oct 2010 at 5:17 pm⁴¹ Doubting Thomas

Mary,

In msg. #34 you asked, “Can you think of any hints anywhere that I might be aware of? Can you think of any verse anywhere in the Bible that I might think even comes remotely close to proving the Deity of the Holy Spirit?”

I am not a biblical expert and have only started reading the bible about 10 years ago. But I really don't know of any verse that even remotely says or hints that the Holy Spirit is the 3rd. person of the Trinity or that the Holy Spirit is a Deity of some sort. Of course I could be wrong, but I don't think so.

I am just learning and am still a child when it comes to being a Christian...

Robert,

Thanks for explaining what 'Selah' means. You asked Ray where he got the idea that Yeshua/Jesus was the right hand of God. I think he may of got it from me. That was just my overall interpretation of what I have read. Of course, like I said to Mary, I am just a layman and I could be wrong...

42. on 22 Oct 2010 at 8:10 pm⁴² robert

“You asked Ray where he got the idea that Yeshua/Jesus was the right hand of God. I think he may of got it from me.”

Thomas

I was really asking for biblical references from Ray but since it is also your interpretation maybe you can help me understand how you came to it.

Have a very blessed and inspiring Sabbath

43. on 22 Oct 2010 at 9:47 pm⁴³ Doubting Thomas

Robert,

Mathew 28:18, “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.’..”

Luke 22:16, “But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.”

Mark 16:19, “So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up to heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.”

Acts 7:56, “And he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.’”

I believe that Yeshua/Jesus is more than just an agent (shileach) of God. Since Yeshua/Jesus has been given “All authority in heaven and on earth” and is “seated at the right hand of the power of God”, it just seems to me that He is therefore the ‘right hand of God’, or at the very least the right hand man of God.

But, I think ‘the right hand of God’ seems to describe his position better.

May you also have a very blessed and inspiring Sabbath...

44. on 22 Oct 2010 at 11:25 pm44 Doubting Thomas

Mary,

I just read an excellent article written by Ron S. dated 10 June 2010, that is called “Shocking Admissions from Trinitarian Scholars” if you type the title of the article into the search box at the top right of this screen the article should come up for you. One of the quotes is from a Prof. Ryrie a Trinitarian scholar. This quote might help you to understand what Frank D. is saying in msg. #37 above.

“The word ‘theology’, from ‘theos’ meaning God and ‘logos’ meaning rational expression, means the rational expression of Christian faith. Theology is intelligible. It can be comprehended by the human mind in an orderly, rational manner” (pg. 13). Ryrie continues, “God communicates in a normal, plain or literal manner. Ignoring this will result in the same kind of confused exegesis that characterized the Patristic and Medeival interpreters” (pg. 17).

It’s a very long article but I believe it is well worth the read.

I hope you have a great weekend...

45. on 22 Oct 2010 at 11:43 pm45 robert

“But, I think ‘the right hand of God’ seems to describe his position better.”

Thomas

We disagree on so little but on this we do disagree but only on timing. I just feel that God saying sit at my right hand TILL I make enemies a footstool shows that Jesus doesn't receive All Power and Authority TILL God has put away Satan so Jesus can reign in every way as a God during God's rest. This includes running everything in the universe during God's rest.

46. on 23 Oct 2010 at 3:36 am46 Jaco

Hey, Guys! (and Gals)

Sorry for my absence lately. Been busy negotiating a possible debate, changed employment, and been preparing for Linguistics exams. (Needless to say, I need your prayers, please 😊)

Just my 2 cents worth into this discussion:

Mary, as noble as it sounds (and certainly is) to depend on holy spirit to guide us into knowing God better, it still has to remain in harmony with **CONFIRMED** inspiration by holy spirit, namely, the Bible. To go along with "inspiration" alone can be very dangerous. We are warned against exactly that in 1 John 4:1

Another word of caution is Gal. 1:8, 9. Even if I were to get a dream, an apparition or mysterious messages declaring to me as good news something different from what I learn to be truth in the Bible, those "messengers" are to be accursed.

So, regardless of how much we "wait upon holy spirit" to teach us the truth; if what we arrive at is not in harmony with Scripture and the cognitive world of ancient **CONFIRMED** true believers, we cannot yield to the implications of those dogma, nor expect them to have proceeded from the True God.

I do agree with Sean. Frank D's response was in no way inappropriate. If you want to see inappropriate, Mary, do yourself a favor and visit other Trinitarian sites where Biblical Unitarians are engaged in dialogue. You'll find snideful and dismissive behaviour by Trinitarians found nowhere else but on atheistic and Islamic websites!

You are welcome to post your thoughts here. But we disagree with you, namely, that Trinitarianism is Monotheism. It most certainly is not. Orthodox Trinitarianism a Greek-Christian hybrid doctrine having no place in Scripture or in a Christian's life. 5 out of 7 makes you also a 5-point Biblical Unitarian...

In Christ,

Jaco

47. on 23 Oct 2010 at 11:37 am⁴⁷ Mark C.

Thomas,

I believe that Yeshua/Jesus is more than just an agent (shileach) of God. Since Yeshua/Jesus has been given “All authority in heaven and on earth” and is “seated at the right hand of the power of God”, it just seems to me that He is therefore the ‘right hand of God’, or at the very least the right hand man of God.

What you describe is pretty much the definition of an agent (shileach).

Jaco,

Mary, as noble as it sounds (and certainly is) to depend on holy spirit to guide us into knowing God better, it still has to remain in harmony with **CONFIRMED** inspiration by holy spirit, namely, the Bible. To go along with “inspiration” alone can be very dangerous. We are warned against exactly that in 1 John 4:1

Another word of caution is Gal. 1:8, 9. Even if I were to get a dream, an apparition or mysterious messages declaring to me as good news something different from what I learn to be truth in the Bible, those “messengers” are to be accursed.

So, regardless of how much we “wait upon holy spirit” to teach us the truth; if what we arrive at is not in harmony with Scripture and the cognitive world of ancient **CONFIRMED** true believers, we cannot yield to the implications of those dogma, nor expect them to have proceeded from the True God.

Very well put!

48. on 23 Oct 2010 at 11:53 am⁴⁸ Frank D

Mary, No mean spirit intended.

2Tim 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Jaco said it better than I ever could.

49. on 23 Oct 2010 at 12:59 pm⁴⁹ Doubting Thomas

Robert (msg. #45),

You said, “We disagree on so little but on this we do disagree but only on the timing.”

I see what you mean that the passages from Psalm 110:1, Mathew 22:44, Mark 12:36, Luke 20:42, and Acts 2:34-35 talking about Yeshua/Jesus sitting at God's right hand until God makes his enemies his footstool, does seem to imply that he won't be granted this "All authority in heaven and on earth" until some point in the future.

I was going by what Yeshua/Jesus says in Mathew 28:18, "... 'All authority in heaven and on earth HAS BEEN given to me' ..." (ESV - emphasis mine) which seemed to me to imply the past tense. Other verses that seem to support the past tense are Mathew 11:27, John 3:35, 13:3, 17:2, Acts 2:36, 1st. Corinthians 15:27, Ephesians 1:20-22, and 1st. Peter 3:22.

I'm not sure how to interpret these apparently contradicting verses...

Mark C.

You said, "What you describe is pretty much the definition of an agent (shileach)."

I thought that Jewish custom would allow a King to have more than one agent (shileach) to represent him to different groups of people (countries, states, etc...). Whereas I believe that since the resurrection of Yeshua/Jesus God has no other agent (shileach) representing him other than Yeshua/Jesus.

Of course this is just my understanding...

50. *on 23 Oct 2010 at 1:27 pm*50 robert

"I was going by what Yeshua/Jesus says in Mathew 28:18, "... 'All authority in heaven and on earth HAS BEEN given to me' ..." (ESV - emphasis mine) which seemed to me to imply the past tense."

Thomas

In mine and my wife's will all that we own has been given to our children. The given part is past tense but to a future possession.

This is how I read this because I see that God still has All Authority and Power until all enemies are made a footstool at which point God can step off his throne to rest his Sabbath and the Anointed One that God has chosen and prepared can move from the right of it to sit upon it.

How could God enjoy HIS Sabbath without someone to oversee HIS creation while God kicks back to enjoy

51. *on 23 Oct 2010 at 3:13 pm*51 *Doubting Thomas*

Robert

You said, "This is how I read it because I see that God still has All Authority and Power until all enemies are made a footstool.."

You of course could be right. I need to think and pray about this for awhile...

52. on 23 Oct 2010 at 4:35 pm52 robert

Thomas

The word in greek that is translated “Has been given” also can be translated “will be given” as we see in this verse Rev 13:15 which uses the exact variant of the word. edoyh is variant of didomi and is the same variant used in Matthew 28:18. Other variants are translated .to give 22 times,will give 14,I will give 11,will be given 10, it will be given 4,he will give 3 and many more future tenses but has been given 5 times along with many more past tenses and many present tenses also.

It is up to the translator to determine what tense so if their belief requires it be past tense they will translate it that way.

but as i have shown i have no problem with it having a past tense because it still relates to a future possession.

Hope this helps

Rev 13:15

The second beast was empowered “to give” (edoyh) life to the image of the first beast so that it could speak, and could cause all those who did not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

Mat 28:18

Then Jesus came up and said to them, 1 “All authority in heaven and on earth “has been given”(edoyh) to me.

53. on 23 Oct 2010 at 5:53 pm53 Ray

I suppose if I was a Trinitarian, I could understand that Jesus is the second person of the Trinity, if I understood the Trinity to be God. However, I understand God to be the Father of Jesus and Jesus to be his Son, his only begotten Son who I believe has always been a part of him. (Isaiah 53)

I wonder how about the holy spirit, the spirit of God, or as some say “the third person of the Trinity.”

Is the holy spirit as God is? I say he is. I say that the spirit of God is as God is, that such a spirit as was in Christ is holy and is of God and that it dwells in us also who believe in Jesus.

I suppose that makes the Holy Spirit (or holy spirit, or “spirit of God”) a Deity, in the sense that it is something that is divine, of God, a spirit having a divine nature which is of God himself.

I believe a person has the liberty to refer to Jesus as the second person of the Trinity if they want to, but let's also remember that there's nothing in scripture that requires others to do the same. (as far as I can tell)

I've heard it said that "Jesus is God, and this is true in the sense that he is the second person of the Trinity."

I trust that I may also say that Jesus is God in the sense that he is as God is, being the express image of his person. I believe there are many ways to say that in worship and praise. If the worship and praise is acceptable to God, (being also acceptable to his spirit which he has given us) then I trust that the thing said is true in some sense and that the sense of it in which we say such things will be judged by the spirit of God.

I believe we all have such liberty in Christ and will be judged for our obedience to the word we have been given.

Blessed are the peacemakers. (Matt 5:9)

54. on 23 Oct 2010 at 7:34 pm54 Mark C.

Thomas,

I thought that Jewish custom would allow a King to have more than one agent (shileach) to represent him to different groups of people (countries, states, etc...). Whereas I believe that since the resurrection of Yeshua/Jesus God has no other agent (shileach) representing him other than Yeshua/Jesus.

Of course this is just my understanding...

The concept of an agent, or *shaliach* (I looked up the correct spelling - I had it wrong before), is not limited to a king, nor to being the one and only representative. It is used of anyone who is sent and acts as a representative of the one who sends him. In that capacity, Jesus is given authority and power from God. (Whether he has ALL authority now, or only some until he reigns, is another issue.)

He is now seated at God's right hand, so whether he is technically functioning as a "sent" agent or as the link between us and the Father is probably more an issue of semantics than anything else. In any case, when the Bible calls him God, or gives him attributes of God, it is in this sense. He perfectly represents God, and is AS God to the world.

Ray,

I believe a person has the liberty to refer to Jesus as the second person of the Trinity if they want to, but let's also remember that there's nothing in scripture that requires others to do the same. (as far as I can tell)

They certainly have the liberty to say it. They also have the liberty to say there is no God if they want to. It's not a matter of whether or not they have the liberty to say it, it's a matter of whether or not they are speaking the truth.

55. *on 23 Oct 2010 at 9:41 pm*55 Ray

Mark,

Which of the two statements above do you think God finds more to his liking? Do they both weigh the same in your opinion?

56. *on 23 Oct 2010 at 9:47 pm*56 Doubling Thomas

Robert,

I just have a few more questions. In Mathew 11:27, when Yeshua/Jesus says, "All things have BEEN HANDED over to me by my Father, and no one know the Father except the Son and anyone to who the Son chooses to reveal him."

And in 1st. Corinthians 15:27, when Paul says, "For 'God PUT all things in subjection under his feet.' But when it says, 'all things are PUT in subjection,' it is plain that he has excepted who put all things in subjection under him."

And in Colossians 2:10, when Paul says, "and you have been filled in him, who IS the head of all rule and authority."

And in 1st. Peter 3:22, when Peter says, "who has gone into heaven and IS at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him."

Are all these the same thing where the translator was able to put these things into the past tense just to match his own beliefs???

BTW - I'm not trying to be argumentative. I'm just trying to make sense out of all these passages that seem to have a reference to Yeshua/Jesus being given 'All authority' in the past tense...

Mark C.

You said, "The concept of an agent, or shaliach, is not limited to a king, nor to being the one and only representative."

Maybe I'm not being clear, but what I'm trying to say is that because the bible says that Yeshua/Jesus "was given all authority in heaven and on earth" and is

“seated at the right hand of the power of God”, it just seems to me that He is much more than just an agent (shaliach) of God.

There were many agents (shaliachs) of God and it was Jewish custom for a King (or anyone else) to have many agents (or shaliachs), but from what I understand ONLY Yeshua/Jesus, since the resurrection, has been God’s representative, mediator, etc... Therefore it seems to logically follow that he must be more than just an ordinary agent (shaliach) of God.

That’s why I think the term ‘right hand of God’ probably describes him best. Of course I am just a layman and this is all just my own humble interpretation...

57. on 23 Oct 2010 at 10:19 pm57 robert

“Are all these the same thing where the translator was able to put these things into the past tense just to match his own beliefs???”

Thomas

They all can be translated in the future tense but i really couldnt tell you from them alone whether or not they should be, thats why I look to what God has said to Jesus about until all enemies are made by God a footstool. Sounds like he going to promote Jesus after He has done this , atleast it does to me.

“BTW - I’m not trying to be argumentative. I’m just trying to make sense out of all these passages that seem to have a reference to Yeshua/Jesus being given ‘All authority’ in the past tense...”

Thomas

I know that you are just searching for the truth, I would never think it was to be argumentative.

58. on 24 Oct 2010 at 1:06 am58 Mark C.

Ray,

Which of the two statements above do you think God finds more to his liking? Do they both weigh the same in your opinion?

I don’t think God likes any form of untruth or falsehood.

Thomas,

Maybe I’m not being clear, but what I’m trying to say is that because the bible says that Yeshua/Jesus “was given all authority in heaven and on earth” and is “seated at the right hand of the power of God”, it just seems to me that He is much more than just an agent (shaliach) of God.

I agree. He is certainly more than “just” an agent. But an agent or emissary (another translation of *shaliach*) is **one** part of what he is, which helps us to understand how he represents God to the world. Thanks for clarifying your point.

59. on 24 Oct 2010 at 5:58 am59 Jaco

Thomas,

There were different extents, as it were, to which someone could function as a sh’liach. It could take the form of a king sending an ambassador, a landlord sending a messenger, or a father sending a son to negotiate business or settle a dispute, etc.

In the case of divine agents, James D. G. Dunn says it well:

One of the most fascinating features of several ancient stories is the appearance of what can be called *theophanic* angels; that is, angels who not only bring a message from God, but who represent God in personal terms, or who even may be said to embody God. The point that emerges presumably is that the tellers of these stories were primarily intent to indicate the reality of the divine presence in these theophanic experiences. It is not that they wished to deny either the otherness of Yahweh, or that God was invisible to human sight. The angel [or messenger] of the Lord in such stories was a way of speaking of God’s immanence without detracting from his transcendence. The angel of the Lord was not simply an envoy from God and did not simply bring humans into the divine presence; rather he brought the divine presence into humans’ daily reality - not simply a message from Yahweh, but the presence of Yahweh. He did not bring the whole of God (that was never possible), but he brought the real presence of God nonetheless. *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence*, pp 67, 68, 71

On the last point, we can understand why Jesus, the exact representation of God (Heb. 1:3) could be called Immanuel - God with us.

Also consider the excellent parable in Luke chapter 20 verse 9-16. Here, the ultimate sh’liach is the son.

So, although you said that you view Jesus as more than a mere agent, I’d rather state that Jesus is a divine agent to the fullest extent, including his sonship and divine kingship as Adoni.

Jaco

60. on 24 Oct 2010 at 6:43 am60 Ray

I don’t believe it to be falsehood to describe Jesus as being God. I think it to be a fair representation of him because of who he is.

However, if we do decide to describe Jesus as being God, we may want to consider that we should do so without confusing him with the Father, lest we become a stumbling block to others, in an unneedful way.

61. *on 24 Oct 2010 at 9:56 am*⁶¹ *Doubting Thomas*

Robert (Msg. #57),

You said, "...that's why I look to what God has said to Jesus about until all enemies are made by God a footstool. Sounds like he is going to promote Jesus after He has done this, at least it does to me."

I agree, but I think I just see it a little different. The way I see it is since he is the 'right hand of God' Yeshua/Jesus is currently being directed on how to use this "All power and authority" that he has been given. Of course as God's beloved Son He can continually be asking God questions like, Why are you having me do this??? or , Why aren't you allowing me to do that??? etc...

After more than 2,000 years of experience of using this "All power and authority" combined with the unlimited wisdom/Holy Spirit that he has been given, Yeshua/Jesus will one day (after his enemies/Satan has been made his footstool), be able to use this "All power and authority" justly and properly without any need of direction from God the Father.

Like I said, what I believe is similar to what your saying, but slightly different.

Jaco,

You said, "I'd rather state that Jesus is a divine agent to the fullest extent, including his sonship and divine kingship as Adoni."

Your description may indeed be better than mine (right hand of God). Like I said this is just my own personal interpretation, my own personal way, so to speak, of looking at and relating to Yeshua/Jesus.

May you and everyone else have a great Sunday...

62. *on 24 Oct 2010 at 10:34 am*⁶² *Mark C.*

Ray,

I agree that it is not falsehood to describe Jesus as God, since he is called God in a few verses in the Bible (in a specific sense).

What I was referring to was your statement, "I believe a person has the liberty to refer to Jesus as the second person of the Trinity if they want to." It is one thing to call Jesus God in a representative sense, but to say he is the second person of the Trinity has absolutely no Biblical basis.

63. *on 24 Oct 2010 at 10:39 am*63 robert

“Like I said, what I believe is similar to what your saying, but slightly different.”

Thomas

The way you explained in the above statement I dont think we really differ.

I believe Jesus even received some power after his baptism when he was adpoted and probably much more after He was truly begotten by God at his resurrection from the dead to become the literal son of God.

Of course God would be preparing Jesus by allowing him to exercise power and authority while sitting at Gods right hand till he is handed it All at once when God rest His Sabbath.

64. *on 24 Oct 2010 at 1:40 pm*64 Ray

Legalism will always be an enemy of Christ. There are those who will think to require others to conform to their views and they are often found on both sides of a matter. They have a certain rule or law they believe must be met, fulfilled, or at least not to be violated.

65. *on 24 Oct 2010 at 1:53 pm*65 *Doubting Thomas*

Robert,

You said, “The way you explained it in the above statement I don’t think we really differ.”

Well I slowly came to the conclusion that I mentioned in msg. #61, after careful thinking, praying, and from studying the verses that I had mentioned in msg. #56. So really it was my sharing what I see with you, that has helped me to change and grow. Hopefully both of us now have a better understanding of our Messiah/King Yeshua/Jesus.

May the peace of God be with you and with all of us...

Danny's Concluding Statement (7a)

September 28th, 2010 by Danny Dixon

This is the thirteenth post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



This debate has turned out to be an entirely different thing than what I had expected. I have debated Marc before, so it was not so much that I would have expected his arguments to be radically different, substantially, than what occurred in the first discussion. I was not, back in June to October of 2006 as focused on his methodology of debate. And I should probably say that he did not, at that time, follow the approach he has taken in this contest—at least not to the degree to which he has done so in the present discussion. I'll say more on that momentarily.

I think in review, Marc has never adequately met the argument presented on the basis of John 5:26; 6:57 that Jesus' life is an existence, from the beginning, that was derived from the Father who gave it to him. In trying to argue that Jesus is omnipotent and omniscient Marc has dodged the issue that anyone who gets his abilities from someone else is not the one who is Almighty. Not only is all authority something Jesus receives from the Father, that very fact demonstrates that for at least some period of time, Jesus was a lesser-in-rank entity. Of course closely related is Marc's belief that Jesus is eternally begotten—an illogical statement that cannot make sense in the human language. Begottenness is a point-in-time reality. Jesus is begotten and therefore had a beginning.

Nor ought we to forget that whatever power Jesus had, manifested in his abilities on the earth as well as in his ability to receive and to answer the prayers of his disciples (John 14:14) are things he has been given the power of God to accomplish. Therefore such things are neither impossible nor to be unexpected of a glorified and gifted individual as was Jesus. The Greek language is even capable of sustaining the concept of someone, a human, receiving worship as depicted in the word *latreuo* (Adam, as recognized in the early Jewish-Christian literature); and a question designed to make nonsensical the idea of Adam receiving worship is shown to be contradictory when Marc will readily admit that the word is used of pagan deities. And when one considers that it is perfectly logical to explain that one God authorizes to be worshipped may receive such glory at his bidding (John 5:23).

Jesus had deity before his coming to earth in Mary's womb, but God was pleased to give it to him again after the resurrection. And I can say confidently that my Lord (*Adoni*) Jesus the Messiah is reigning and will reign, seated at God's right hand until his enemies are made his footstool. But his present seat beside God is not an arrangement extending into eternity past. Marc's Angel of the Yahweh as being Yahweh was logically challenged by even respected Trinitarian scholars. Not to mention that Jesus' claims not at all to be God as his opponents thought he was doing; he was, historically speaking, sentenced to death, most likely, for insulting hardened leaders at his trial.

And let us not forget John 1:1-2, not only that the passage teaches that Jesus was personally involved in creation, but that the entity, the Logos was with God (The Son was with the Father) and the Logos was divine. The reader will have to judge how well scholars are represented as they re-read this debate. Indeed this whole debate, as I mentioned above, has a marked aspect of how one looks at scholarship. Rather than argue points, Marc has merely parroted scholars. But I've demonstrated that scholars can be quoted in support of opposite traditions.

This leads to a crucial point, how will the reader judge Marc and Danny as regards argumentation. I shan't assume reader- assessment, but I, again, will ask the readers of this debate to watch for fair treatment of texts both in respect to Greek-English scholarship. But please keep in mind that it is not one's ability to demonstrate the reality.

I have no knowledge of how long comments can go on. If they can continue, I hope scholar-readers here will prayerfully seek truth as they read.

Blessings on opportunities Marc has in his teaching English in the Philippines, that he may have open doors to point men and women to God.

It will be interesting to see if others will take up some of Marc's challenges to debate related matters. Until then Peace to all!

Danny André Dixon

Marc's Concluding Statement (7b)

October 2nd, 2010 by Marc Taylor

This is the fourteenth and final post in a moderated debate between Biblical Unitarian Danny Dixon and Trinitarian Marc Taylor. A complete list of posts can be accessed [here](#).



If Danny isn't convinced that Christ is referred to as "Master" in Jude 1:4 (despite virtually all the lexicons/dictionaries that disagree with him) I would direct him to 2 Peter 2:1 where despotes is also applied to the Lord Jesus. The Christian has "only" one Master (Jude 1:4) in heaven and as with God (Act 4:24) it applies "without qualification" to the Lord Jesus. Danny doesn't believe that only really means only but it could mean another (others?). His attempt at defining (really redefining words) is necessary in order to deny the obvious - that Christ is God.

Danny affirms that Christ is "all-powerful" and "all-knowing"...but not really. This is because only the Father is omnipotent and omniscient in the absolute sense. Danny never informed us of any words where all-powerful and all-knowing don't really mean "all". Are there any words where a Being can be all-powerful and all-knowing but not really? There are none. Danny's disastrous attempt at defining words one way and then redefining them and asserting a kind of "well, not really" is like a man attempting to ride two horses at the same time going in opposite directions. The outcome of both speak for themselves.

Since his appeal to Nebuchadnezzar failed Danny is left with having two Lords of lords despite the fact that the text reads "Lord of lords".

On Job 9:8, Danny provided no other passage/s in the Old Testament where the Hebrew word for alone could encompass others. It is not defined nor used as such despite Danny's hope that it is.

Concerning Genesis 48:15, 16, Danny never addressed the fact that since Jacob already entered in God's presence it cancelled out any idea/need for the Messenger of YHWH to act as an agent/substitute.

I want to thank Danny for this debate. I am sure he was very busy with teaching and other things. May God incline all of our hearts unto Himself (1 Kings 8:58).

5 Responses to "Marc's Concluding Statement (7b)"

1. on 02 Oct 2010 at 6:17 pm1 Doubting Thomas

Marc,

I want to thank both you and Danny for having a very civilized debate with no

personal attacks on each others characters or motives. It is very nice to see Christians behaving like Christ taught us to behave.

May the peace and wisdom of God be with both of you and with all of us...

2. *on 06 Oct 2010 at 9:13 pm2 Marc Taylor*

1. Is there anyone else who can explain who their “only Master” in heaven is?
2. Can someone please supply the words that describe an omniscient and/or omnipotent Being but that Being isn’t really omniscient/omnipotent?
3. Who is the singular Lord of all lords (plural) in heaven?
4. How does Agency apply to Genesis 48:16 when Jacob already entered into God’s presence?

3. *on 06 Oct 2010 at 9:23 pm3 robert*

Marc

All those questions have already intelligently answered by many here.
It is you that hasnt understood the answers.

Sean

I should take my blame in what Marc did because I baited him into attacking me.
sorry

4. *on 06 Oct 2010 at 9:46 pm4 Marc Taylor*

Robert,

Thanks for your “answer”. Anyone else?

5. *on 16 Oct 2010 at 5:02 am5 Marc Taylor*

1 Peter 2:25 (KJV) reads, For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

This then is another passage demonstrating Christ’s omniscience thereby proving He is God.

TDNT: The LXX uses episkopos in the same twofold way as secular Greek. On the one hand it denotes God, and on the other it has the general sense of supervisors in different fields. If in polytheistic belief each deity acts as episkopos over certain men and things, the one God does this far more comprehensively. He is the absolute episkopos who sees all things.

Thus at Job 20:29 the LXX renders the Hb. El by episkopos. As such God is Judge of the ungodly. The term is here is brought into relation to kurios. Philo has

the same line of thought. He calls God ephoros kai episkopos in Mut. Nom., 39, 216. The combination of martus kai episkopos, already used by Homer, is also found in Philo at Leg. All., 3, 43. In this capacity God is the One from whom no wickedness can be hidden. ho tw n holwn episkopos is the Omniscient, Som., 1,

91. Thus on Philo's view Moses finely introduces God in the first chapter of the Bible as "the Father of all and the Contemplator of all that has come into being," This judgment rests on the statement that "God saw everything tha he had made, and, behold, it was very good," Migr. Abr., 135. In Jewish thought this profound understanding of God as the One who sees all things produced the term panepiskopos, which occurs more than once in the Sibyllines: 1, 152; 2, 177; 5, 352.

In particular, God sees into the human heart. In this respect the LXX links martus and episkopos at Wis. 1:6 Cf. Ac. 1:24, where God is called kardiognwstes. God sees what is concealed in the soul of man, says Philo Migr. Abr., 115. God alone perceives the enthymemata of man, Migr. Abr., 81 (2:614, episkopos - Beyer). Later on page 615:

Christ is He who has the fullest knowledge of souls. He knows every inner secret, as is said of God in Wis. 1:6 and the passages quoted from Philo (- > 614). He is also the One who gives Himself most self-sacrificingly to care for the souls of the faithful (cf. episkopew in Hb. 12:15). It is for this reason that poimen and episkopos are so closely related. The phrase "shepherd and bishop of your souls" carries within it all that is said by Greek speaking Gentiles and Jews about God as episkopos. As suggested by the context, which points us to the deepest mysteries about salvation history, episkopos is thus a title of majesty ascribed to Jesus in His work in relation to the community.