

What The Bible Says About

Harmony In The Church

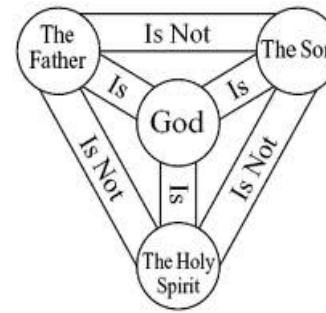
Part Two



Living Together In The Love Of God

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God is a "Trinity". You may not understand *how* God is a Trinity, but the Scripture makes it very clear that He is a Trinity. **God the Father** is the Leader and Planner of the Trinity. He is the Architect, the One Who designed all things. It is the Father Who said:

Genesis 1:26 Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness.

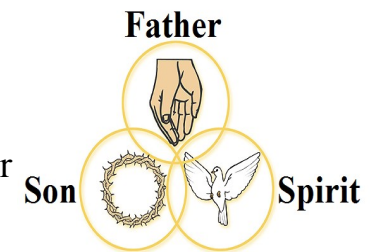
The **Holy Spirit** or **Spirit of God** is the Helper, the One mentioned in:

Genesis 1:2 ... and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters ...

The Third Person of the Trinity is **God the Son**. He is the *manifest Member of the Godhead*, the Incarnate Savior. The Bible says:

John 1:1-3 (KJV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

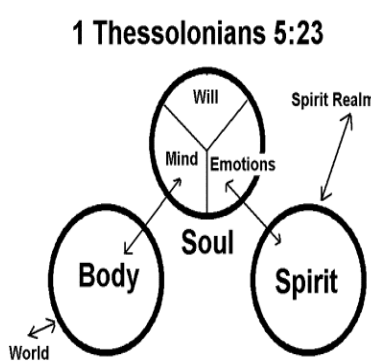
Jesus Christ created, the Holy Spirit helped, and God the Father planned. These Three work together as One.



Though God is Almighty, and though He is able, God does not work apart from His Trinity. When God says "I will" then His will is always collaborated between Father, Son, and Spirit. The prideful "I will" that says "look at me" originates not in God, but in Satan. Only Satan and his followers are foolish enough to stand up and says "I will" (Isaiah 14:14) for his or her self.

The Bible tells us that when God made man, that the Trinity designed mankind as an expression of His Trinity. We read:

Genesis 1:26-27 (KJV) God said, Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness: and let them have dominion 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.



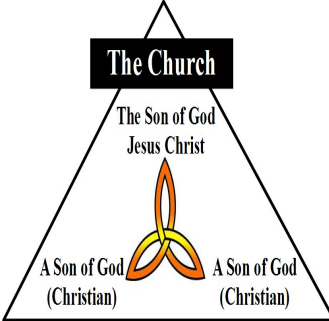
Each human is designed as a trinity: body, soul, and spirit:

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (KJV) I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Animals have bodies and souls, but only we who are human were designed by God to have body, soul, and spirit.

God wants us to work together as He does. God designed man to be in a male and female marriage. As creatures formed in His image we are to work together.

God is a compound unity. God designed us to be in compound unities or "communities". God calls us as His people to be in community with Him and with one another. Communities share common characteristics, laws, interests, and goals. God can use a community.



Jesus Christ our Lord said:

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

When we come together in **Christ's name (obedient to His authority and His Word) as a community (sharing His Word as law)**, then the *manifest Member of the Godhead* is with us. We are in community with God the Son, and while united in this community we are unstoppable. Jesus said:

Matthew 16:18 (KJV) ... upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

While we as God's Church stay in community, working together for God's glory and to fulfill God's goals, we are unstoppable.

God Is Never The Author Of Confusion

I am convinced that the greatest single Scripture in the Bible is *not* **John 3:16** - though this is a great and precious promise from God. The greatest verse teaches us that our Triune God is the God of order, not of disorder.

1 Corinthians 14:33 ^{KJV} **For God is not [the author] of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.**

Our **Triune God is the God of Order**. He has shown us His order in creation. King David said:

Psalms 8:3-4 ^{KJV} **When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?**



Our God is the Great Architect of all you see. He is the God of Order. God will not use a confused and uncommitted person, nor will He use a confused and uncommitted Church.

Look at the people God used in the Scripture.

God used Abraham, calling him our of Ur (ancient Babylon). God told Abraham:

Genesis 12:1 ^(KJV) **Now the LORD had said unto**

Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee ...



As long as Abraham followed God, he was invincible. **His nephew Lot left God** to follow his own greed in **Sodom and Gomorrah**. What did Abraham get? He was blessed with a child Isaac, and he received God's promise:

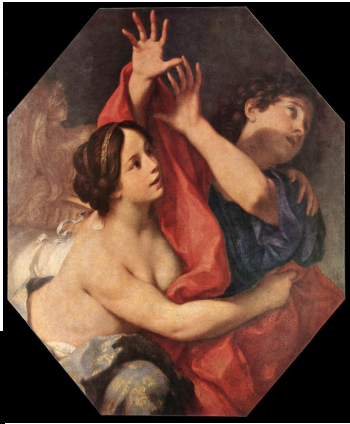
Genesis 12:2-3 ^(KJV) **And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**

What did Lot receive? He lost his wife, lost his business, and ended up poor with two daughters who enticed him to incest.

God used Joseph Joseph was a descendent of Abraham, a child of God's covenant promise. Cast into Egyptian bondage by his jealous brother, **Joseph was made the head servant of Potiphar's household**. When Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph he said:

Genesis 39:9 ^(KJV) **... how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?**

Joseph knew that to do such a thing was to **sin against God**. So he refused, and was cast into prison because of



it. **Because Joseph kept his focus on God, in time he became the *prince regent of Egypt*, second only to Pharaoh the King.** This put Joseph in position to be a blessing to his whole family.

Joseph followed God which led the small family of Jacob in time to become some 6 million strong.

For some *four hundred and thirty years* Israel grew as a nation - protected in the heart of the *then* most powerful nation in the world. The Scripture says:

Exodus 12:40 ^{KJV} Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, [was] four hundred and thirty years.

God promised Abraham many years before that his seed Israel

Genesis 15:13-14 ^{KJV} shall be a stranger in a land [that is] not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

Because Joseph walked with God, Israel was planted in Egypt. Once Israel was planted in Egypt they had relative peace for some *thirty years*, followed by *four hundred years* of persecution and enslavement. But God

was in control every step of the way.

We are to walk with God, focused on Him and His Word, no matter what state we find ourselves in. God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace!

God used Jochebed and the Princess

Three hundred and fifty years into their Egyptian enslavement a lady by the name of **Jochebed** had a child named **Moses**. The King of Egypt **Pharaoh** had decreed that all little boys born be drowned in the Nile. Jochebed had a choice: to drown Moses, or hide him. She chose the latter. The Bible tells us that Jochebed **hid Moses for about three months (Exodus 2:1-10)**, then prayerfully put him in a little Ark and floated him down the Nile. The **Princess of Egypt** found little Moses and raised him to be her own. **If these ladies had not followed the will of God, Moses would never have been there to lead Israel out of Egypt.**



God used Moses When Moses was *eighty years old* the Lord led him from the Deserts of Midian back to Pharaoh's court, carrying the message of Almighty God:

Exodus 8:1 ^{KJV} ... Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

Please note how that reads: "**Let MY people go, that they may SERVE ME**". God used Moses to call Israel out of Egypt, but He was also calling Israel into partnership with Him.

Those whom God saves, He saves to serve. God calls His people to be in partnership with Him.



God led Israel out of Egypt. Pharaoh wasn't willing to let Israel go, but the Lord brought a series of *ten plagues on Egypt*. In the tenth plague the **firstborn children of everyone not under the blood**

of the lamb was shed. Israel left Egypt in triumph, just as God promised. Israel went *through* the waters of the Red Sea, and God kept His promise to His people. They passed through the waters of the Red Sea and survived, whereas the Egyptians drowned in that same sea. God promises us:

Isaiah 43:2-3 ^{KJV} **When thou passest through the waters, I [will be] with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. 3 For I [am] the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior...**

We can walk through the fires and the waters of life as long as we walk *with* the Lord Who loves us! Our God calls us to walk with Him one step at a time one day at a time, and we will be blessed.

God Will Not Bless Disobedience And Disharmony

Israel had everything! Did the first generation of Israel succeed? No, they didn't. Why not? The Apostle writes:

1 Corinthians 10:1-4 ^(KJV) **Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.**

The Israel that God saved to serve Him came through the Red Sea. They came through the desert. They followed Jesus Christ! Look at your text: "**they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ**". Israel was sustained by Jesus Christ. As they passed through the desert they were sustained by the Grace of Christ. It was the Lord Who led them out of Egypt, the Lord Who called them to walk with Him, the Lord Who protected them.

1 Corinthians 10:5 ^{KJV} **But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.**

Israel was **overthrown in the wilderness**. What caused them to be overthrown? Four sins are mentioned - and they all apply to the Church.

1 Israel lusted after evil *things*. What does this mean?

1 Corinthians 10:6 ^{KJV} Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Word Study "evil things" is the Greek KAKOS, which means "the wrong thing". Rather than walk with God and be satisfied with what He gave them, they fought against their leaders and cried for what they left in Egypt. They said:

Numbers 11:1-6 ^{KJV} And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? 5 We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: 6 But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.

The Israelites were overthrown by their lusts for what they left in Egypt. God called Israel out of Egypt, just as He calls His Church out of the world. We are not to despise God's blessings, as Israel despised the manna the

Lord gave them. The Scripture says:

Numbers 11:31-34 ^{KJV} And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, 32 .. and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp. 33 And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague. there they buried the people that lusted.

2 The Israelis began to worship other gods rather than the Lord Who saved them. The Scripture says:

1 Corinthians 10:7 ^{KJV} Neither be ye idolaters, as [were] some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

God saves us to serve HIM, not some other god. Israel worshiped a *golden calf* (Exodus 32:1-6), and expressed their idolatry by making eating, drinking, and playing their primary concern. This caused them to lose the Promised Land.

The Corinthian Church started out in partnership with the Lord. But, as we will see, they became like ancient Israel, worshipping a golden calf instead of a Risen Savior.

3 The Israelis began to engage in and tolerate sexual sin among their members.

1 Corinthians 10:8 ^{KJV} Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand



This is a reference to **Number 25:1-9**. The Bible tells us that while Israel was in Shittim that they began to "commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab".

Following this sexual orgy Israel as a nation joined with the god **Baal Peor**, the phallic god of Mount

Peor. **God killed twenty three thousand people with plague, and another thousand were killed by the rulers of Israel in an attempt to restore order.**

God does not save His people so they can be sexually promiscuous. Sexual promiscuity is confusion, a refusal to adhere to God's design of the family.

Illustrate 24,000 Israelites died because they committed fornication. In America in the year 2000 there were an estimated 35,278 deaths from Syphilis, HIV, Hepatitis C, and AIDS.

4 The Israelis began to tempt Christ, and to murmur. The Bible says:

1 Corinthians 10:9-10 ^{KJV} Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. **10** Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

These two sins were actually committed in:

Numbers 21:4-6 ^{KJV} And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. **5** And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the



wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. **6** And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

Israel despised the Grace that God had given them. They mocked His leadership, and mocked His provision. As a result God sent the "**destroyer**" among them, and many lost their lives.

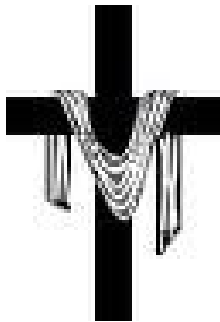
When a local Church (like Corinth) forgets that it is a

product of God's Grace and of the shed Blood of Christ, God is upset with it. This is why Paul warned Corinth - and us - that we need to be thankful to our Father for what we have. Paul said:

1 Corinthians 10:11-12 ^{KJV} Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

How were the **fiery serpents** dispelled from Israel? God told Moses to **put a bronze serpent on a staff, and that those who focused on it would be healed.** Our Lord Jesus referred to this same thing when He told Nicodemus:

John 3:14-15 ^{KJV} ... as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.



Cursing is turned to blessing when the Christian and the Church focused on the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Head. He guides our Church. And we will have victory as long as we keep our eyes on Him and His Word!

