

In our series about what is stated concerning Jesus in the various books of the New Testament, this article examines the book of 1 Corinthians. It is claimed by many preachers and denominations that Jesus is part of a Trinity, along with God the Father and the holy Spirit. If this is so, we surely should find evidence of it in a New Testament book such as 1 Corinthians, which covers Christian beliefs. The holy Spirit is real, of course, but it is it a person? Is the Trinity doctrine in 1 Corinthians?



Is the Trinity doctrine in 1 Corinthians?

It is claimed by many theologians that the Trinity doctrine is THE most important doctrine of Christianity. For example:

“No doctrine is more fundamental to the Faith than the Trinity”—Dr Norman L Geisler

“The Trinity is a doctrine where error is especially deadly”—Dr John MacArthur

We believe that John MacArthur is onto something when he says, *“The Trinity is a doctrine where error is especially deadly”*, although we disagree about exactly what that “error” is. Let’s examine 1 Corinthians, by looking for evidence for, or against, the Trinity.

1 Corinthians 1:1-3,4,6,9 - “An apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God . . . To the church of God in Corinth and to those sanctified in Christ Jesus . . . Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus . . . God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you . . . God is faithful who has called you into

fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord . . . ” (NIV). – In the opening few verses of 1 Corinthians, God and Jesus are presented as entirely separate and distinct individuals. No greetings from the holy Spirit or the Trinity are mentioned. Why is the holy Spirit not mentioned here? Could it be because it’s not a person? Of course, the holy Spirit is real, even though it is not mentioned here. Now, if God and Jesus were part of a Trinity, as so boldly asserted by theologians, this would be a logical place to mention the holy Spirit, and/or Trinity, in these opening greetings.

1 Corinthians 1:2 - “To the church of God being in Corinth, having been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be holy, with all those in every place calling on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, theirs and ours:” (Berean Literal Bible). Some claim that “calling on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” means that early Christians prayed to Jesus, however, the scriptures reveal that is not the case. The phrase *“to call on the name of our Lord . . . means to confess his lordship rather than to pray to him.” (The Interpreter’s Bible).* The writer of 1 & 2 Corinthians, the apostle Paul, did not think of Jesus as God. He referred to “God” as being “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 1:3 NLT), and said, **“we pray to God” (2 Corinthians 13:7 ESV),** not “our Lord Jesus Christ”.

1 Corinthians 1:28,30 - “God chose the lowly ... It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God.” – The scripture makes it plain that the Corinthian Christians are “in Christ Jesus” because of God’s choosing. We also learn that Jesus comes from God, but is not God himself. God does not come from Jesus. As Jesus himself said, “I came from God. I came from the Father” (John 16:27,28 NAB). Thus, the scriptures are quite clear that Jesus Christ is not God. If the holy Spirit was a person, and also if the Trinity really existed, it would seem like we should have seen some mention of them in this first, or introductory, chapter of 1 Corinthians. Why don’t we? We’ll find out why as we analyze the next chapter of the book.

1 Corinthians 2:10 - “These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.” (NIV). Trinitarians have

claimed that the word “searches” indicates something that only a person can do, proves the holy Spirit is a person. However, the holy Spirit is personified here, as it sometimes is in other scriptures (1 John 4:6). In this very first mention of the holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians, it is called **“the Spirit” (NAB)**, or **“his spirit” (NIV)**. God reveals things *through* the Spirit, because he operates by using the holy Spirit to accomplish his purposes. The language in this verse (“the Spirit”; “his Spirit”) is indicative of the fact that the holy Spirit is not a person. Without the spirit being a person, there is no Trinity.

1 Corinthians 2:11 - **“Among human beings, who knows what pertains a person except the spirit of the person that is within? Similarly, no one knows what pertains to God except the Spirit of God” (NAB)**. The Spirit of God is compared with the spirit of humans. The activity of this “spirit of God” is compared with the “spirit” of the self-consciousness of humans. The spirit of humans is to their own individual thoughts as the Spirit of God is to his own thoughts. Holy Spirit is therefore “holy intelligence,” a revelation of the actual mind of God, but not a person, as Trinitarians assert.

1 Corinthians 2:12 - **“We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit of God” (NRSV; NAB)**. Many translations render it with Trinitarian bias, “the Spirit who is from God”. Just as “the spirit of the world” isn’t a person, “the Spirit of God” isn’t a person either. We take note that it is “THE Spirit of God”. This is not descriptive of a person. Notice the similarity: “He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the holy Spirit’” (John 20:22 NAB). *“This action recalls Gn 2:7 where God breathed on the first man and gave him life; just as Adam’s life came from God, so now the disciples’ new spiritual life comes from Jesus”* (NAB note). The point is that the holy Spirit isn’t a person.

1 Corinthians 2:13 - **“Words taught by the Spirit”**. Trinitarians have claimed this means the holy Spirit is a person, because it is said to ‘teach’. However, the holy Spirit is personified here, as it sometimes is in other scriptures. Notice that, once again, it is called **“the Spirit**. God reveals things *through* the Spirit, because he operates by using the holy Spirit to accomplish his purposes. The language in this verse (“the Spirit”) is indicative of the fact that

the holy Spirit is not a person. Without the spirit being a person, there is no Trinity.

1 Corinthians 2:16 - “Who has known the mind of Yahweh?... But we have the mind of Christ” (LSB margin).– “Yahweh” here is Almighty God the Father. There are distinctive differences between God and Jesus Christ. The ability to know “the mind of Christ”, but not the mind of God, is an indication that God “the Father is greater than” Christ ([John 14:28](#)). Jesus Christ admitted he did not know as much as his Father ([Matthew 24:36](#); [Mark 13:32](#); [Acts 1:8](#)). This eliminates the equality aspect of the Trinity doctrine. The holy spirit is not mentioned here because it is not a person, but is God’s **“power” (Acts 1:8)**, and, therefore, has no mind. The Trinity is not mentioned because it is entirely fictional.

1 Corinthians 3:23 - “You are of Christ and Christ is of God.” – “Of God” means Christ comes from God the Father. However, God is not “of Christ”. Jesus said, “I came from God, I came from the Father” ([John 16:27,28](#) NAB). He is “the firstborn of all creation” ([Colossians 1:15](#) ESV; NASB; NAB; KJV), which means Jesus had a beginning to his life, so he has not been eternal. Without the Son being eternal, Jesus cannot be God, and the Trinity doctrine collapses..

1 Corinthians 4:1 - “As servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed.” – Two entirely separate, distinct individuals are mentioned, “Christ,” and “God.” Notice, however, that it is “God” who has revealed the “mysteries”, not “Christ”, which shows that God is greater than Christ. God here is “the Father”, who Jesus said, “is greater than” he is ([John 14:28](#)). Thus, the equality aspect of the Trinity doctrine is eliminated.

1 Corinthians 5:7 - “For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed.” – ‘Christ was sacrificed’, not God. “God . . . never dies” ([Habakkuk 1:12](#) NJB). However, Jesus “Christ died” and “was dead” ([1 Corinthians 15:3](#); [Revelation 1:18](#)), so Jesus can’t be God. The fact that Jesus Christ hasn’t been eternal destroys the Trinity dogma.

1 Corinthians 6:11 - “In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and through the Spirit of our God.” (NJB) – The holy Spirit, rather than being referred to as a person, is referred to as “the Spirit of our God”, meaning it emanates from God, but is not God. Without the holy Spirit being a person, the so-called third person of the Trinity, the entire Trinity doctrine collapses! The scriptures themselves are the worse enemy of “false doctrines” (1 Timothy 1:3 NIV), such as the Trinity.

1 Corinthians 8:6 - “there is for us only one God, the Father, who is the Creator of all things and for whom we live; and there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created and through whom we live.” (GNB) – ‘There is *only one* God, the Father’, not a 3-in-1 monstrosity. An obvious distinction is made here between God, who is “the Creator of all things”, and ‘Jesus Christ, through whom God created everything’. Even though Jesus Christ is called “Lord”, that doesn’t make him either “God”, or “the Creator”. Those titles belong to the “the Father”, as we can see from this verse. Jesus is obviously excluded from being God in this verse, and the holy Spirit isn’t even mentioned.

1 Corinthians 10:4 - “that rock was Christ”. Trinitarians have sometimes claimed that Jesus Christ being called “rock” because Almighty God is metaphorically called “the Rock” (Deuteronomy 6:4). “Rock” is used here as a figure of speech, similar to bread and water being used as figures of speech in John 4:14; John 6:30-35.. If the Trinity “Godhead” is true, then why are the Father and the holy Spirit not also included in this figurative “rock”? This is a clue that the Trinity is a ‘false doctrine’ (1 Timothy 1:3).

1 Corinthians 10:16 - “a participation in the blood of Christ... in the body of Christ” (NIV) – In discussing the significance of the Lord’s supper, the blood and body of Christ, not God, symbolize Christ’s sacrificial death. Since “Christ died” (1 Corinthians 15:3), and **“God . . . never dies” (Habakkuk 1:12 NJB)**, Christ cannot be God.

1 Corinthians 11:3 - “The head of Christ is God” – “God is shown to be someone other than “Christ” in this verse. “God” is also shown to be superior (“the head”) over Christ.”

Trinitarians sometimes claim that Jesus, the Son of God, if he wasn't already equal to the Father prior to his resurrection, was made equal to Almighty God the Father at his resurrection. But this verse proves that Jesus was still not equal to his Father at his resurrection, and thereafter. As Jesus himself said, "the Father is greater than I am" ([John 14:28 GWT](#)). With the lack of equality between the the Father and the Son, as exemplified by this verse, one of the main tenets of the 'false doctrine' ([1 Timothy 1:3 NIV](#)) of the Trinity is blown away.

1 Corinthians 11:29 - "Eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ" - In discussing the significance of the Lord's supper, the blood and body of Christ, not God, symbolize Christ's sacrificial death. Since "Christ died" ([1 Corinthians 15:3](#)), and **"God . . . never dies"** ([Habakkuk 1:12 NJB](#)), Christ cannot be God.

1 Corinthians 12:6,11 - "There are differences of operations, and the same God who makes active all things in all persons . . . and one and the same Spirit makes all of these active, distributing to each appropriately, as it will" (1 Corinthians 12:6,11 Hart). "There are many different forms of activity, but in everybody it is the same God who is at work in them all. But at work in all these is one and the same Spirit, distributing them at will to each individual" (NJB). "But all these gifts are the activity of the one and same Spirit, distributing them to each individual at will" ([1 Corinthians 12:11 REB](#)). Most translations render verse 11, "just as He wills," as if the holy Spirit is a person. Trinitarians use this as one of their "proofs" that the holy Spirit is a "person." Note that in the accurately rendered Hart translation, the holy Spirit is referred to as "it". Also, since "God has given us of his Spirit" ([1 John 4:13 NAB](#)), "God . . . has given us a share in his Spirit" ([1 John 4:13 NJB](#)), it is obvious the holy Spirit is not a person, since one cannot have "a share" of a person. God uses the "Spirit" to enforce and enact his will. Without the holy Spirit being a person, the Trinity doctrine collapses.

"Some of us are Jews, and some of us are Greeks. Some of us are slaves, and some of us are free. But we were all baptized into one body through one Spirit. And we

were all made to share in the one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:13 ICB) Christian unity is stressed, despite great diversity. The Greek word for “one” used here is “hen”, meaning unity.

1 Corinthians 15:3,4 - “Christ died for our sins . . . He was buried, and he was raised on the third day” – God didn’t die, because, “Yahweh . . . God . . . never dies” (Habakkuk 1:12 NJB). Jesus was resurrected, because he “was dead” (Revelation 1:18). Since “Christ died”, he cannot be God, and he has not been eternal, which are two of the main pillars of the Trinity dogma. With the “eternal” feature of the Trinity doctrine scripturally eliminated, the Trinity dogma is vanished.

1 Corinthians 15:3,5 - “Christ . . . appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve” (NAB) – This scripture confirms Jesus isn’t God. How did he “appear” to Peter? Christ was “put to death in the flesh, he was made alive in the spirit” (1 Peter 3:18 NAB). “The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon” (Luke 24:34 NAB). This means that Jesus “appeared in another form” (Mark 16:12), such as a materialized body. Since Jesus Christ appeared to Peter after he was resurrected from the “dead” (Revelation 1:18), and God can’t die (Habakkuk 1:12), but Jesus did, Jesus cannot be God.

1 Corinthians 15:24,27,28 - “Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father” (NAB). “When it said everything is subjected, this obviously cannot include the One who subjected everything to him. when everything has been subjected to him, then the Son will be subjected to the One who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all” (NJB). “Clearly, God has put everything under Christ’s authority. When God says that everything has been put under Christ’s authority, this clearly excludes God, since God has put everything under Christ’s authority” (1 Corinthians 15:27 GOD’S WORD Translation). This verse provides extremely strong evidence that God “the Father is greater than” Christ (John 14:28). “The Father” is referred to as being Jesus’ “God.” This could not be the case if Jesus was God. ‘Handing over the kingdom to his God and Father’ is strong

evidence that, even *after his resurrection*, Jesus is still not equal to God the Father, who is still “greater than” Jesus ([John 14:28](#)). God has never been subjected to the Son, but the Son is subjected to the Father. God has never been subjected to the Son, but the Son is subjected to the Father. This one scriptural text, not to mention numerous others, completely destroys the Trinitarian dogma that the Son of God, Jesus Christ is God and equal to his Father.

1 Corinthians 15:45,50 - “It is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living being,’ the last Adam a life-giving spirit” (NAB). “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (NIV). Trinitarians like to claim that Jesus was resurrected with a physical body to support their “God-man” assertion about Jesus, but this verse plainly shows that Jesus was resurrected as a “spirit”, further evidence against the notion that Jesus was resurrected with a physical body and went into heaven with that physical body. The verses makes plain that such a thing is impossible, further debunking the Trinitarian “God-man” notion.

1 Corinthians 15:57 - “Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (NAB). Thanks is given to God, *through* Jesus, not *to* Jesus, or the holy Spirit, thus showing God the Father’s superiority over all. God, the superior, operates through Jesus. As Jesus said, in another context, “no one comes to the Father except *through* me” ([John 14:6](#)). Jesus’ apostle Peter explained, “Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you *through* him” ([Acts 2:22](#) NIV).

1 Corinthians 16:17 - “I rejoice in the arrival of Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus” (NAB). Trinitarians assert that the mention of God, Jesus, and the holy Spirit at [Matthew 28:19](#) proves the Trinity doctrine to be true. However, the three Christian men mentioned here in the verse above obviously do not make up a Trinity, which gives evidence that the mere mention of the three together, God, Jesus, and the holy Spirit, at [Matthew 28:19](#), doesn’t make them a Trinity either.

We have examined 1 Corinthians in detail, and have discovered no evidence of any aspect of the Trinity doctrine. In fact, the Trinity doctrine is flatly contradicted by 1 Corinthians.