

The letter of 1 John was one of the last books of the New Testament to be written, near the end of the first century. Trinitarians say that the New Testament teaches the Trinity doctrine with absolute definiteness. If these assertions are true, we should surely find some evidence of such at this late date in the first century, because **“the faith . . . was once for all handed down to the holy ones” (Jude 3 NAB)** with the completion of the Bible. So let’s see exactly what we do find when we examine the question, “Does 1 John teach the Trinity doctrine?”

**1 John 1:2 - “This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us” (NLT).** It is very obvious that this verse is describing Jesus Christ, and that “he was with the Father.” Notice how this compares with, “the Word was with God . . . He was with God in the beginning” (John 1:1,2). Using the scriptures, we can discern that God is the Father, not Jesus Christ. Being “with” someone makes it clear that “two” separate and distinct individuals are being discussed (John 8:17,18). The statement, “We have seen him” is clear and unequivocal proof that Jesus cannot be God, because **“no one has ever seen God” (1 John 4:12 NIV).** The holy Spirit is not mentioned here, which it likely would be if the Trinity doctrine was true. Nothing is either stated, nor implied, about a Trinity, or that Jesus is Almighty God.



“Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1)

**1 John 1:3 - “Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ”**

**(NIV)**. Two entirely separate and distinct individuals, the Father and his Son, are mentioned, but not the holy Spirit, or the Trinity. God the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ are both real individual persons. Jesus Christ himself makes it clear that he and his Father are “two witnesses,” who are entirely separate and distinct individuals, as opposed to only “one witness” (John 8:17,18; Deuteronomy 17:6). The holy Spirit is not a person, so no fellowship is possible with it.

**1 John 1:5 - “This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all” (NLT)**. Jesus has been an instrumental witness that God the Father is “light”. “You will have Yahweh for an everlasting light” (Isaiah 60:19 LSB). “Let us walk in the light of Yahweh” (Isaiah 2:5 LSB). “We heard from Jesus . . . God is light”, is clear testimony indicating that “two” entirely distinct and separate individuals are involved, namely Almighty God and his Son, Jesus Christ (John 8:17,18), but not the holy Spirit, because it is not a person.

**1 John 1:7 - “The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin” (NIV)**. His Son? Whose Son? “God the Father” (2 John 3). The Father-Son relationship is emphasized by implication. A father and a son are often similar, but are always two entirely different individuals, for example, being different in age. The same is true for God the Father, who is **“eternal” (1 Timothy 1:17 NIV)**, and his Son Jesus, who had an **“origin” (Micah 5:2 NRSV)**. “The blood of Jesus” means that **“Christ died for our sins” (1 Corinthians 15:3)**, in contrast to **“Yahweh . . . God, who never dies” (Habakkuk 1:12 NJB)**. The scriptural truth that Christ has not been eternal and “died” eliminates a major component of the Trinity doctrine. All this is in stark contrast to the Trinity doctrine, which blurs the distinctions between God the Father and his Son Jesus.

**1 John 2:1,2 - “We have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous. He himself is the sacrifice for our sins” (NLT)** – Jesus is with his Father, serving, in effect, as our lawyer, before “God the judge of all”

(Hebrews 12:24), in this word picture. A lawyer and a judge are two separate and distinct individuals (John 8:17,18), with the judge being the higher power (John 14:28). “Christ died for our sins” (1 Corinthians 15:3), which is something that God cannot do (Habakkuk 1:12 NIV). Thus, the equality and the eternity claims of the Trinity dogma are eliminated.

**1 John 2:20 – “But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things” (NKJV).** *“This anointing is in the Old Testament sense of receiving the Spirit of God . . . True knowledge is the gift of the Spirit [cf [Is 11:2](#)], and the function of the Spirit is to lead Christians to the truth [[John 14:17,26](#); [16:13](#)]” (NAB note).* “‘It will come to pass in the last days,’ God says, ‘that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all *flesh*’” ([Acts 2:17](#) NAB). All of this weighs heavily against the Trinitarian idea that the holy Spirit is God, the third person of their Trinity. Trinitarians have claimed that since Jesus “searches hearts and minds” ([Revelation 2:23](#) NIV), he must be God, because God knows everything. However, as we can see from the phrase, “you know all things”, such statements are not meant to be stretched to their ultimate, but understood in light of both the local and remote context of the entire Bible.

**1 John 2:22-24 – “Who is the liar except the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Everyone who denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also . . . you will also abide in the Son and in the Father” (LSB).** The conjunction “and” means two entirely separate and distinctive individuals. A key issue mentioned here is “that Jesus is the Christ”, not the Trinitarian “Jesus is God”, or “Jesus is God the Son”. A parallel verse to these verses is, “Whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son” ([2 John 1:9](#)). The Father and the Son are two entirely separate individuals is stressed in [1 John 2:22-24](#), but especially with the use of the word “both” to describe them in [2 John 1:9](#). “Both” clearly means “two” ([John 8:17,18](#)). What about the holy Spirit? Why is it not mentioned here, if the Trinity doctrine is true? – Because the holy Spirit is not a person, and the Trinity is a false doctrine ([1 Timothy 1:3](#))!

**1 John 3:8,16 – “The Son of God appeared . . . Jesus Christ laid down his life for**

**us” (NIV).** The scriptures do not say “God appeared”, or “God the Son”. Jesus is never called ‘God the Son’ in the Bible. Almighty God didn’t die, in fact, he cannot die. “My God, my Holy One, you will never die” ([Habakkuk 1:12 NIV](#)). “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” ([1 Corinthians 15:3 NIV](#)). So that means Jesus can’t be God.

**1 John 3:20 - “God is greater than our hearts and knows all things” (NAB).**

Trinitarians have claimed that since Jesus “searches hearts and minds” ([Revelation 2:23 NIV](#)), he must be God, because God knows everything. Almighty God the Father is the only one who “knows all things.” Jesus, “Son though he was, he learned obedience from the things he suffered” ([Hebrews 5:8 NAB](#)). Jesus had to ‘learn obedience’, which shows he is not all-knowing, as God is. However, we can see from the definitive phrase, “God . . . knows all things”, God the Father is set apart from everyone else. Indeed, only he is said to have “perfect knowledge” ([Job 36:4 NIV](#)).

**1 John 3:21-23 - “We have confidence before God and we receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ” (NIV).** Here, “God” Almighty is clearly shown to be someone other than “Jesus Christ”, and as supreme (“we receive *from* him”), as the one who grants our requests. Jesus himself said, “the Father is greater than I am” ([John 14:28](#)). Jesus Christ is clearly presented as God’s distinctive Son (“*his* Son”), never as the unscriptural “God the Son,” or as God Almighty. Without the Son being God, and equal to the Father, the Trinity doctrine collapses.

**1 John 3:24 - “All who obey his commands keep in union with him, and he does with them; and this is how we know that he keeps in union with us-by the Spirit which he has given us” (AAT).** A key component of the Trinity doctrine is the supposed personhood of the holy Spirit. However, the terminology, “the Spirit” is very strong evidence that holy Spirit is not a person. Persons are not referred to as “the.” Notice also that it is referred to as “the Spirit *which* he has given us,” another clue that the holy Spirit is not a person. “‘It will come to pass in the last days,’ God says, that I will pour out a portion of my

spirit upon all flesh'" ([Acts 2:17](#) NAB). "A portion of my spirit" is not indicative of personhood.

**1 John 4:1-3 - "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit of the Antichrist*, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world" (NKJV).** God is shown to be in control, and he wants everyone to acknowledge Jesus as his Son, but not as part of a Trinity, or 3-in-1 God. The Trinity doctrine presents a Jesus who had only had "impersonal human nature", calling it "anhypostasia". This contradicts the scriptures which say: "Jesus Christ came as a human being" ([1 John 4:2](#) GNB), "fully human in every way" ([Hebrews 2:17](#) NIV). Anyone proclaiming that was "God-man" does "not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh"."They preach a different Jesus" ([2 Corinthians 11:4](#) NLT). "Even if we, or an angel from heaven, should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to the gospel we have proclaimed to you, let him be accursed" ([Galatians 1:8](#) LSB). "God is not human" ([Numbers 23:19](#)). Since 'Jesus came to earth as a human', and "God is not human", therefore, Jesus can't be God. Also, a being who is both God *and* man could hardly be truly human, 'tempted in all points just as we are' ([Hebrews 4:15](#) NIV). The doctrine that Jesus was God is incompatible with the scriptural teaching that he was really human. The "God-man," "Dual-nature" concept is, in reality, "a different Jesus" ([2 Corinthians 10:4](#) NLT), and "a different kind of good news" ([Galatians 1:6](#) NLT). "The spirit of God" is not indicated to be a person. It is "the spirit of God", not 'God the Holy Spirit', a concocted term, not found anywhere in the scriptures. "God is a spirit" ([John 4:24](#) GWT).

**1 John 4:6 - "We belong to God, and anyone who knows God listens to us, while anyone who does not belong to God refuses to hear us. This is how we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit" (NAB).** Trinitarians claim the holy Spirit is a person, the third person of their Triune God. One of the "proofs" they use is turning personifications in the scriptures of the holy Spirit into literalisms to assert the holy Spirit is a

person, such as “the spirit of truth” at [John 16:13](#) & [1 John 4:6](#). However, not only is “**the spirit of truth**” personified at [1 John 4:6](#), but so is “**the spirit of deceit**” personified. Therefore, we do well to ask, “If ‘the spirit of truth’ is a person, why isn’t ‘the spirit of deceit’ a person?” “The “spirit of deception” represents false teachings and the influence of the antichrist, as mentioned earlier in [1 John 4:3](#). This dichotomy is a recurring theme in Scripture, highlighting the ongoing spiritual battle between truth and error, as seen in [Ephesians 6:12](#)” (*Bible Hub Study Bible*). False doctrines, such as the Trinity, cannot hold up under ‘cross-examination’ ([Proverbs 18:17](#)).

**1 John 4:9 - “By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him” (LSB; NASB).**

What do we learn from this verse?

1. “God” is someone other than “His only begotten Son”
2. The greater sends the lesser
3. Someone who is “begotten” had a beginning to their life
4. The Father is older than the Son

“God” is mentioned as being someone other than “his only begotten Son”. God is the sender, and Jesus is the sent one, in this Master-slave relationship. It is not a relationship of equals. The greater sends the lesser. Also, Jesus is said to be “**His only begotten Son**”, which means he was created. Someone “begotten” has a beginning to their life, and their parents are obviously older. Jesus’ life had an “**origin**” ([Micah 5:2 NRSV](#)), whereas “**Yahweh**” “**God**” has existed “**from everlasting**” ([Psalm 90:2 LSB](#)). These scriptural truths eliminate the eternity of the Son aspect of the Trinity doctrine. Without the Son being God, and without the equality and eternity components, the Trinity doctrine collapses.

**1 John 4:10 - “Not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son as an**

**atoning sacrifice for our sins” (NIV).** “God” is shown to be someone other than “his Son”. The Master-servant relationship between God the Father and his Son (“God . . . sent his Son”), the fact that Jesus died (“atoning sacrifice”), are both emphasized again, which strongly implies that Jesus can’t be God. Without the Son being God, and without equality and eternity for the Son, the Trinity doctrine collapses.

**1 John 4:12 - “No one has ever seen God” (NIV).** Contrast this with John’s testimony in his letter that he and others saw Jesus, meaning the Son of God, Jesus Christ, cannot be Almighty God, as we can see from the following scriptures:

- **1 John 1:1 - “Whom we have heard and seen” (NLT)**
- **1 John 1:2 - “We have seen him” (NLT)**
- **1 John 1:3 - “What we have actually seen and heard” (NLT)**
- Further indicating he couldn’t be God, these scriptures below clearly prove that Jesus is separate and distinct from God the Father:
- **1 John 1: 2 - “He was with the Father” (NLT).**
- **1 John 1:3 - “Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ” (NIV).**

**1 John 4:13 - “This is the proof that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us a share in his Spirit” (NJB). “He has given us of his Spirit” (NAB).** The Trinity doctrine asserts the holy Spirit is the third person of the supposed Triune God. However, this scripture refers to giving “us a share in his spirit,” or “of his Spirit,” and is a very strong evidence that the holy Spirit is not a person. One cannot be given a share in a person. This is very similar to “God says, ‘that I will pour out a portion of my spirit’” ([Acts 2:17 NAB](#)), and “you . . . were sealed with the promised holy Spirit, which is the first

installment of our inheritance” (Ephesians 1:13,14 NAB). The holy Spirit is also referred to as “it” and “itself” (John 1:32 ESV; 14:17 NAB; Acts 2:33; 8:15; 11:15 NAB; Romans 8:16,26,27 NAB; 1 Peter 1:11 NAB). Without the holy Spirit being a person, the Trinity doctrine collapses.

**1 John 4:14 - “The Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world” (NIV).**

Obviously Jesus and God the Father are two separate and distinct individuals, with God, the sender, being “greater than” “the Son of God” Jesus Christ (John 14:28; 20:31), the Son. Without equality, the Trinity doctrine collapses.

**1 John 4:15 - “Jesus is the Son of God” (NIV).** Trinitarians claim that Jesus is “God the Son”, the second person of the Triune God. However, in the scriptures, Jesus is never referred to as ‘God the Son,’ as Trinitarians often call him. “God sent his Son” (Galatians 4:4 NIV), which means “God” is someone other than “his Son”.

**1 John 5:1 - “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God, and everyone who loves the father loves [also] the one begotten by him” (NAB).** We notice that one qualification of being “begotten by God” is to believe “that Jesus is the Christ”. If Jesus is Almighty God, why isn’t it a stated qualification to believe that Jesus is Almighty God? Obviously, it would be, if that were the case! Believers are begotten by God by being adopted as his spiritual children. Jesus was begotten by God the Father because he was created by him (“the firstborn of every creature” [Colossians 1:15 KJV]). “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has become a child of God” (1 John 5:1 NLT). God has children, but no brothers (Romans 8:14; Galatians 3:26; Revelation 21:7). Jesus has brothers, but no children. Christians are God’s children, but are brothers of Jesus Christ (Matthew 25:40; Hebrews 2:11), which makes God superior to Christ. These are two very different relationships, clearly showing that Jesus cannot be Almighty God.

**1 John 5:5 - “Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God” (NIV).** Trinitarians would have us believe the main issue is that “Jesus is God”, the second person of the Triune God. However, notice here in 1 John 5:5 that



the real issue is believing that **“Jesus is the Son of God,”** not believing that Jesus is God, or “God the Son”, or part of a Trinity. In the scriptures, Jesus is never referred to as ‘God the Son,’ as Trinitarians often call him. “God sent his Son” ([Galatians 4:4 NIV](#)), which means “God” is someone other than “his Son”.

**1 John 5:6-8—“This is the one who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and blood. The Spirit is the one that testifies, and the Spirit is truth. So there are three that testify, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three are of one accord” (NAB). “”And there are three that bear testimony on earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one” (1 John 5:8 Webster’s Bible Translation).** The Trinity doctrine asserts that the Son of God, “Jesus Christ”, and the ‘holy Spirit’ are both equally and eternally God, along with the Father. Trinitarians are quite inconsistent in their equivocation of terms. In this text, they equivocate “the Spirit” to God. However, “the Spirit” is personified in this text, along with “water and blood”. “Water” stands for baptism, and “blood” stands for Christ’s sacrificial death. “The Spirit” is no more God than “the water and the blood” are God. God didn’t get baptized, and didn’t die either ([Habakkuk 1:12 NIV](#)), therefore Jesus could not be God. **“The Spirit”** is obviously not a person because persons are not referenced as **“the,”** or **“that.”**

**1 John 5:7,8 - “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one” (KJV).** “Some late manuscripts of the Vulgate add: *testify in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth: the .* (not found in any Greek manuscript before the fourteenth century).” —NIV footnote. So, this is how they got into Bible translations, such as the King James Version (KJV). There is thus zero evidence that these spurious words of [1 John 5:7,8](#) were originally part of the letter of 1 John. These spurious words weren’t added to any Greek manuscript of 1 John until about 1300 years after the apostle John wrote this Bible book. Trinitarians in the past often used these verses in 1 John to support the Trinity. However, these words are not found in any

Greek manuscript before the fourteenth century, and so are considered spurious, and therefore not inspired by God's holy Spirit. Modern translations usually exclude these words on this textual basis, or put them in either single or double brackets to indicate these words are highly questionable at best, or, they at least they note the manuscript facts in a footnote. These facts are nowadays so widely known that knowledgeable Trinitarians never use these verses in 1 John to support the Trinity anymore.

### **1 John 5:8 - "the spirit, the water and the blood, and these three agree together."**

**(NTFE).** The Trinity doctrine asserts the holy Spirit is "the third person of the Trinity. However, if "the spirit" is a person, then "the water and the blood" are persons, because they also testify. The obvious fact that "water" and "blood" are not persons, is a clue that "the Spirit" is not a person either. We've examined the five verses in 1 John where the holy Spirit is mentioned, and each of them indicates the holy Spirit is not a person. Without the holy Spirit being a person, there is no Trinity. Therefore, the Trinity is not in 1 John. It is a "false doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:3,4).

**1 John 5:9,10 - "God has testified about his Son" (NLT).** Obviously "God" and "his Son" are entirely separate and distinct individuals. **"We accept human testimony, but God's witness is greater, because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony ... the testimony God has given about his Son." (NIV).** God's testimony about "the Son of God", Jesus Christ, is the strongest, most powerful testimony of all. These two verses make it abundantly clear that "God" is someone other than "his Son". According to *The Forgotten Trinity*, Jesus and his Father are both "within the One Being that is God" (p 23). Contrast this with what Jesus said about himself: "If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony cannot be verified" (John 5:31 NIV). Why? Because, "One witness is not enough" (Deuteronomy 19:15 NIV). Jesus said that, "I am one witness who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me", thus confirming "the testimony of two witnesses is true" (John 8:17,18 NIV). The scriptures expose the bogus claims of the Trinity doctrine, and prove the impossibility of Jesus being God.

**1 John 5:11-13 - “This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son . . . the Son of God” (NIV).** Jesus is called “the Son of God” many times in the New Testament, but Jesus is called ‘God the Son’ zero times in the Bible. “God the Son” is one of the unscriptural Trinitarian “man-made ideas” that “cancel the word of God” ([Mark 7:7,13 NLT](#)). Without “God the Son,” there is no Trinity in 1 John.

**1 John 5:18-19 - “We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe. We know that we are children of God” (NIV).** Jesus is called “the One who was born of God”, meaning that he came from God, was created by God, having an “origin” to his life ([Micah 5:2 NRSV](#)). This means Jesus not only cannot be “God”, who is “from eternity” ([Psalm 90:2 NAB](#)), it proves he is not even equal to God ([John 14:28](#)). Christians are “children of God”, but are not children of Christ. Christ has “brothers” ([Matthew 25:40](#); [Hebrews 2:11](#)), no children. God has “children”, but no brothers ([Romans 8:14,15](#); [Galatians 3:26](#); [Revelation 21:6,7](#)). Without the Son of God being eternal and equal to God, there is no Trinity in 1 John.

**1 John 5:20 - “And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life” (LSB; NASB).** We have here a primary truth of the Bible — “The Son of God”, “Jesus Christ”, “has given us understanding so that we may know the true God”! Here we have both “the Son of God”, and “Him who is true”, “the true God”, mentioned. However, “Him who is true”, “the true God” is the subject here, and naturally takes precedence over “his Son Jesus Christ”. Another key point from this verse is that “the true God” is said to be understandable, that is, knowable ([John 17:3](#))—in stark contrast to the Trinitarian God, who is said to be “mysterious” and “unknowable”! *“The trinity of persons within the unity of nature is a mystery which ultimately escapes understanding” (Dictionary of the Bible, page 900, by John L. McKenzie, S. J.).* Since “the true God” has a “Son, Jesus Christ”, Jesus Christ cannot be the true God. The problem for Trinitarians is that no one but the Father is called “the true God” or “the only true God”, in the scriptures!

Trinitarians sometimes claim that “his Son Jesus Christ . . . is the true God” in [1 John 5:20](#). However, **“this”** in [1 John 5:20](#) does not necessarily have to refer to the nearest noun. The English word “this” translates the Greek word “houtos”, and refers to the subject “Him who is true”, and not to “his Son Jesus Christ”. Trinitarians would have us believe that the word “this” must refer to the nearest noun. However we can see from a comparative analysis of [1 John 2:22](#) and [2 John 7](#) that this is not the case.

“Who is the liar except the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son” ([1 John 2:22](#) NASB). “This” obviously refers not to “Jesus Christ”, but to the subject, “the liar”. If “this” must refer to the nearest noun, it would mean Jesus Christ is a liar and antichrist. “For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist” ([2 John 7](#) NASB). “This” obviously refers, not to Jesus Christ, but to the subject, “many deceivers”. If “this” referred to the nearest noun, it would make Jesus Christ a deceiver and antichrist. “Houtos” is also used in the Greek text at [John 1:40, 41](#), [Acts 4:10,11](#) and [Acts 7:18,19](#), and can be seen in the English text of literal translations, such as the Literal Standard Version.

## CONCLUSION

Does [1 John](#) teach the Trinity? Not only is there no evidence of the existence of any Trinity in [1 John](#), there is powerful evidence against the Trinity doctrine. Thus, the entire letter of [1 John](#) is filled with statements of proof that there is no Trinity, that Jesus is not God Almighty, and the holy Spirit is not a person!