

# THE TRINITY

*Solution or Problem?*

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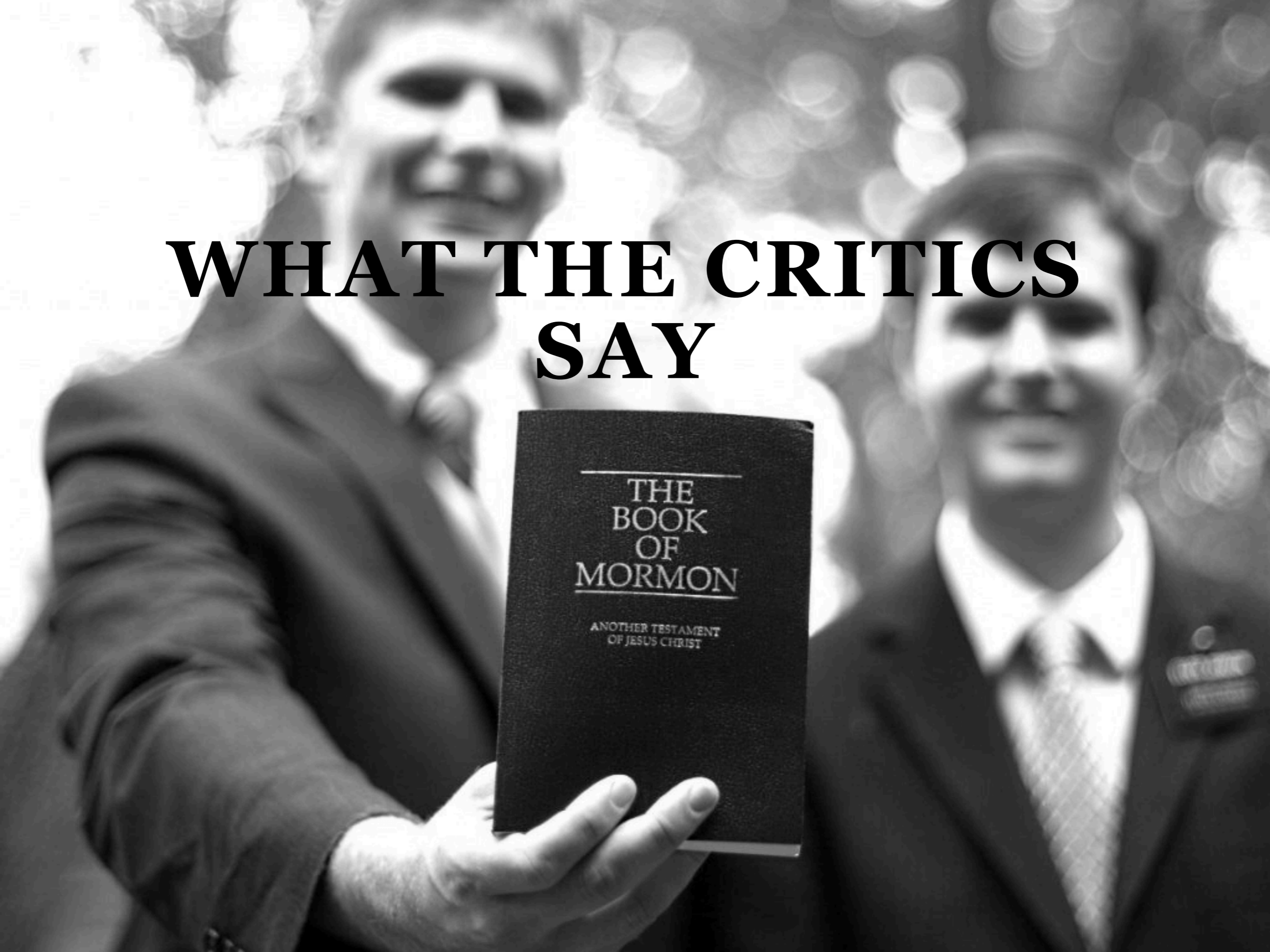
# AGENDA

- What the critics say
- What is the Trinity?
- What's the problem?
- What does the Bible say?
- The solution
- Is it logical?
- Common objections

# WHAT THE CRITICS SAY

THE  
BOOK  
OF  
MORMON

ANOTHER TESTAMENT  
OF JESUS CHRIST





# WHAT THE CRITICS SAY

“What the Bible teaches about God and Jesus is clear and simple. It is not difficult to understand. Neither the word “Trinity” nor the concept is found in God’s Word.”

*-The Watchtower, February 2010*

<https://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/wp20100201/trinity-doctrine/>

# WHAT THE CRITICS SAY

“Latter-day Saints reject the doctrines of the Trinity as taught by most Christian churches today. These creeds were canonized in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. and do not reflect the thinking or beliefs of the New Testament church.”

*-Ensign, March 1988*

<https://www.lds.org/ensign/1988/03/comparing-lds-beliefs-with-first-century-christianity?lang=eng& r=1>



# WHAT THE CRITICS SAY

“O People of the Book! Do not exaggerate in your religion, nor utter anything concerning God save the truth. Verily the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a messenger of God, and his Word, which He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him. So believe in God and His messengers, and say not ‘Three.’ Refrain! It is better for your. God is only one God.”

*-The Qur'an, 4:171*

<http://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=4&verse=171>

The background features a glowing white geometric pattern on a dark, gradient background. The pattern consists of several overlapping, curved lines that form a central, bright white area, resembling a stylized cross or a complex geometric design. The lines are thick and have a soft, glowing effect, creating a sense of depth and light. The overall composition is centered and balanced.

**WHAT IS THE TRINITY?**



# WHAT IS THE TRINITY?

“We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.”

-Athanasian Creed, 500-600 A.D.

<https://www.ccel.org/creeds/athanasian.creed.html>

# WHAT IS THE TRINITY?

Within the one being of God, there exists three co-equal and co-eternal persons; namely, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit



# WHAT IS THE TRINITY

**The Trinity is an explanation of the following Biblical conclusions:**

- There is only one God (monotheism)
- Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- The three are distinguished from one another



**WHAT'S THE  
PROBLEM?**



# WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Many explanations over thousands of years to understand the biblical data...

...plus thousands of years worth of criticism

# WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

## **ARIANISM**

- The Father is God
- Jesus is “a god”, a created angel
- holy spirit is an impersonal force



# WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

## **MODALISM**

- The Father is God
- Jesus is God
- The Holy Spirit is God
- All three *are the same person*

# WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

## **SOCINIANISM**

- The Father is God
- Jesus is the human Messiah and did not pre-exist his human birth
- holy spirit is an impersonal force



# WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

## **LIBERALISM**

- The Father is God
- Jesus' identity is an evolution and "became" God over time
- The Bible is unclear and contradictory

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?





# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

- There is only one God (monotheism)
- Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- The three are distinguished from one another

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

- **There is only one God (monotheism)**
- Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- The three are distinguished from one another



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD**

“Hear, O Israel! Jehovah is our God, Jehovah is one! You shall love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.”

(Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD**

“You are My witnesses,” declares Jehovah, “and My servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me.”

(Isaiah 43:10)



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD**

“Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.”

(1 Corinthians 8:4)

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

- There is only one God (monotheism)
- **Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**
- The three are distinguished from one another



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## JESUS IS IDENTIFIED AS GOD

“Then [Jesus] said to Thomas, ‘Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here with your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.’ **Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’** Jesus said to him, ‘Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.’”

(John 20:27-29)

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **JESUS IS GOD...the eternal creator**

**“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. **All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.**”**

(John 1:1-3)



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## JESUS IS GOD...the eternal creator

Everything That Exists

*All things that never  
came into being...*

**GOD  
JESUS**

*All things that came  
into being...*

**ALL  
CREATED  
THINGS**

All  
created  
by Jesus





# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

**JESUS IS GOD...through prayer, worship, devotion**

“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”

(John 17:3-5)



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **JESUS IS GOD...through prayer, worship, devotion**

“Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for **I am God**, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that **to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.**” (Isaiah 45:22-23)

“God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that **at the name of Jesus every knee will bow**, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that **every tongue confess Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** (Philippians 2:9-11)



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **JESUS IS GOD...through prayer, worship, devotion**

“Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.’ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, ‘To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.’ And the four living creatures kept saying, ‘Amen.’ And the elders fell down and worshiped.”

(Revelation 5:11-14)



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **JESUS IS GOD...through prayer, worship, devotion**

“Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that **I am Jehovah your God, and there is no other**; and My people will never be put to shame...And it will come about that **whoever calls on the name of Jehovah will be delivered.**” (Joel 2:27, 32)

“That if you **confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord**, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.’ For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; **for the same Lord is Lord of all**, abounding in riches for all who **call on Him**; for ‘**Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.**’” (Romans 10:9-13)



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD...and a person**

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” (2 Corinthians 3:17)

“For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is to him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:10-11)



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD...and a person**

“But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.” (1 Corinthians 12:9-11)

“In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groaning too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:10-11)

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

- There is only one God (monotheism)
- Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- **The three are distinguished from one another**



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **FATHER, SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT...distinguished**

“Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.’” (Luke 3:21-22)

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all” (2 Corinthians 13:14)



**THE SOLUTION**



# THE SOLUTION

## Putting the pieces together

The  
Father  
is God

The  
Holy  
Spirit  
is God

Three  
distinct  
persons

There  
is only  
one  
God

Jesus  
is God



# THE SOLUTION

**Putting the pieces together...explaining the Trinity**

- One God
- Three Persons



# THE SOLUTION

## **Putting the pieces together...explaining the Trinity**

- One God...the nature/substance/ontology of God
- Three Persons...Father, Son, Holy Spirit

# THE SOLUTION

Putting the pieces together...explaining the Trinity

Being



Person



# THE SOLUTION

**Putting the pieces together...explaining the Trinity**

Being: that which makes something **what** it is

Person: that which makes something **who** they are

# THE SOLUTION

**Putting the pieces together...explaining the Trinity**

Being: God

Person: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit





**IS IT LOGICAL?**

# IS IT LOGICAL?

## **An illogical example**

I. There is only one God

II. There are three separate, distinct, individual gods



# IS IT LOGICAL?

## **The law of non-contradiction**

Contradictory statements cannot both be true in the same sense at the same time

“A is B” and “A is not B” are mutually exclusive

I. My Toyota Highlander is parked in the parking deck right now

II. My Toyota Highlander is parked on the moon right now

# IS IT LOGICAL?

## **Another illogical example**

- I. God is three distinct persons
- II. God is a perfect unity of only one person with one nature



# IS IT LOGICAL?

## **The Trinity is Logical**

- I. There is one God by nature
- II. The one God's nature is shared by three distinct persons

# IS IT LOGICAL?

## **Logical examples of “three-in-ones”**

One Triangle...three angles

One Family...three members

One God...three persons



OXFORD CIRCUS STATION

# COMMON OBJECTIONS




WHAT DOES  
THE BIBLE  
REALLY  
TEACH?

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# COMMON OBJECTIONS

**Most objections to the Trinity misunderstand the following**

A difference in *function* does not indicate an inferiority in *nature*

“Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:3)



# COMMON OBJECTIONS

**Most objections to the Trinity misunderstand the following**

A difference in *function* does not indicate an inferiority in *nature*

“You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the **Father is greater than I.**” (John 14:28)

# COMMON OBJECTIONS

**Most objections to the Trinity misunderstand the following**

Jesus is God *and* Man

“Jesus said to her, ‘Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’” (John 20:17)



# COMMON OBJECTIONS

## **Objection: Jesus is created, not eternal**

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” (Colossians 1:15)

# COMMON OBJECTIONS

## **Objection: Jesus is created, not eternal**

“He is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** of all creation.” (Colossians 1:15)

“I have found David My servant; with My holy oil I have anointed him...I also shall make him My **firstborn**, the highest of the kings of the earth.” (Psalm 89:20, 27)



# COMMON OBJECTIONS

## **Objection: Jesus is created, not eternal**

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.” (Colossians 1:15-17)

# COMMON OBJECTIONS

## **Objection: God cannot die**

Assumption: God cannot take on human flesh

“The Word was God...” (John 1:1)

“...and the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us...” (John 1:14)



# COMMON OBJECTIONS

## **Objection: God cannot die**

Assumption: God cannot take on human flesh

“Christ Jesus, who, although **He existed in the form of God**, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and **being made in the likeness of men.**” (Philippians 2:6-7)

# COMMON OBJECTIONS

## **Objection: God cannot die**

Assumption: death is the cessation of existence

“For to me, to **live is Christ, and to die is gain**. But if I am to **live on in the flesh**, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to **depart and be with Christ**, for that is very much better; yet to **remain on in the flesh** is more necessary for your sake.” (Philippians 2:21-24)



# COMMON OBJECTIONS

**Objection: Jesus never said, “I am God. Worship me!”**

“My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.”  
For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He was not only breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.”

(John 5:17-18)

# COMMON OBJECTIONS

**Objection: Jesus never said, “I am God. Worship me!”**

“For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.”

(John 5:23)



# COMMON OBJECTIONS

**Objection: Jesus is not God because God cannot be seen**

“No one has ever seen God.” (John 1:18)

# COMMON OBJECTIONS

**Objection: Jesus is not God because God cannot be seen**

**“No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.” (John 1:18)**



A circular stained glass window with various symbols. At the top is a hand with fingers spread, with the letters 'Y H W H' above it and 'A B B A' below it. Below the hand is a lamb standing on a platform, with 'IC' and 'XC' above it. To the right is a dove with wings spread, perched on a cross. The background features a grid of circles and floral motifs.

# CONCLUSION



# CONCLUSION

## **The Trinity is a solution**

- There is only one God (monotheism)
- Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- The three are distinguished from one another



# CONCLUSION

## Who has the problem?

### Arianism

- ~~There is only one God (monotheism)~~
- ~~Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit~~
- The three are distinguished from one another

# CONCLUSION

## **Who has the problem?**

### **Modalism**

- There is only one God (monotheism)
- Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- ~~The three are distinguished from one another~~



# CONCLUSION

**Who has the problem?**

**Socinianism**

- There is only one God (monotheism)
- ~~Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit~~
- The three are distinguished from one another

# CONCLUSION

**Who has the problem?**

**Liberalism**

- ~~There is only one God (monotheism)~~
- ~~Three persons are identified as God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit~~
- ~~The three are distinguished from one another~~



# CONCLUSION

**“Who do you say that I am?”**

**(Matthew 16:15)**

-Question-

