

*What is the Mormon Church. . . . really?*

# Study on the Trinity: the Mormon view in contrast to the Biblical Christian view— Part TWO



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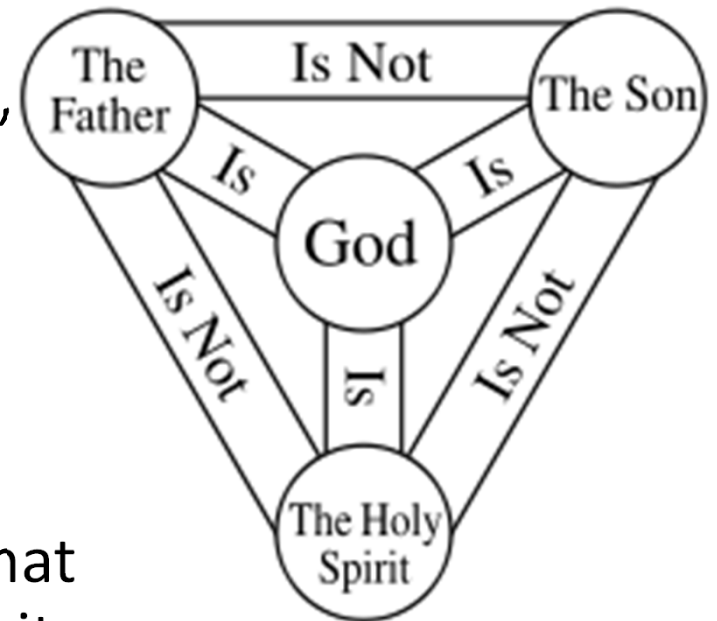
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# Review and background

- The Trinity is one of the KEY differences between Christianity, cults, and other religions: Mormons, Jehovah Witness, Islam and many others
- The same WORDS may be used, but they have COMPLETELY different meanings in the different religions.
- Last week we looked at the verses that showed how all members of the Trinity are God.
- This week we begin to answer the question: “modes” or “persons.”
- Also Mormon view of Holy Spirit

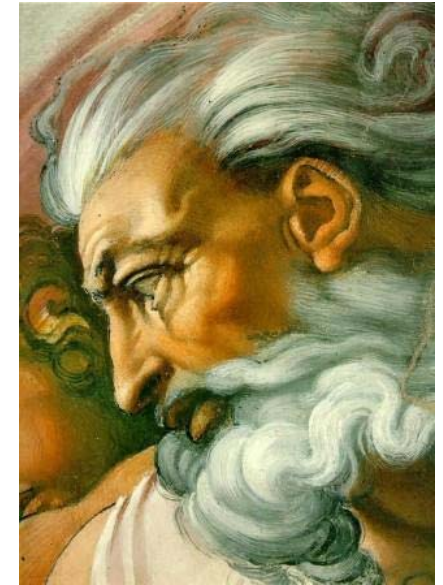


# What does it mean to be a person

- **personhood** : The state or condition of being a person, especially having those qualities that confer distinct individuality, personal identity, individuality - *the distinct personality of an individual regarded as a persisting entity*
- What is not a person: a force, influence, rock, solar object, myth
- Personhood is more than form
- What makes a “you” “YOU” throughout all changes, all eternity
- **The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are persons.**
- The Bible does not explicitly identify them as persons, but it is reasonable to infer that they are persons based on explicit affirmations in Scripture.
  - <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-trinity-a-case-study-in-implicit-truth/>
- Look at characteristics of personhood for each of the members of the trinity.
- \*\*Keep in mind that the listing here is not exhaustive—cross reference the verses

# God the Father

- ***Engages in personal relations***
- “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand (John3:35)”, and
- ***Has the attributes of personality:***
- **Intellect:** Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. (Matt.6:8)
- **Emotions:** But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. (Ps. 86:15)
- **Will:** For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. (Matt.12:50)—emotions of Jesus shown here also.
- ***Note, this is a great cross reference to:*** And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (Matt. 25:40)



# God the Son

- **The Son engages in personal relations with God and people**
  - Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.(John 11:41–42),
- **Has the attributes of personality: intellect**
  - But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.(John 2:24–25),
- **Emotions**
  - But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them (Matt. 9:36)
  - Jesus wept. (John 11:35)
  - Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. (John 13:1)
- **Will**
  - Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. (Luke 22:42).



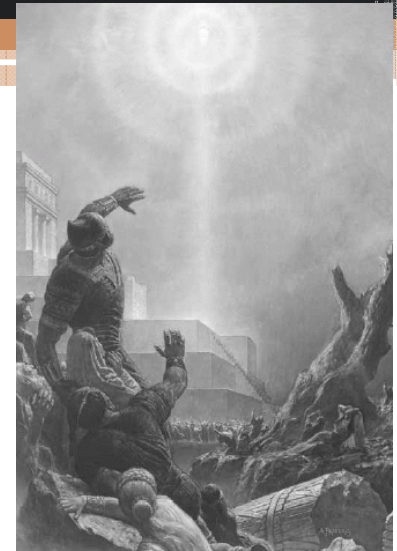
# Mormons view

- Passages that show personality in the Father and Son probable agreement, because in their theology they are exalted men.
- However, not eternally, co-existing members of the Godhead
- **Holy Spirit a bit different:**
- From Mormons 13 Articles of Faith (so much so wrong here though the same words used)
  - 1. We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.
  - 2. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.
  - 3. We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.
  - 4. We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.
  - (baptism and laying on of hands through Mormon church only)
- Complete contradiction of Bible: See additional handout



# Mormon view clarified

- Mormonism also makes a distinction between the Holy Ghost and Holy Spirit. LDS Apostle John A. Widtsoe said, "**The Holy Ghost, sometimes called the comforter, is the third member of the Godhead, and is a personage distinct from the Holy Spirit. As a personage, the Holy Ghost cannot any more than the Father and Son be everywhere present in person**" (*E.& R.*, p. 76).
- Apostle Widtsoe claimed that the Holy Ghost is in touch with the entire universe through the Holy Spirit, "**The chief agent or agency by which the Holy Ghost accomplishes his work is usually spoken of as the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of God. It is a universe-filling medium or influence**" (*E.& R.*, p. 62).
- Apostle Parley Pratt said there is "**a divine substance or fluid, called the Holy Spirit**" (*Key to Theology*, p. 29). Then he declared, "**The purest, most refined and subtle of all substances, and the one least understood, or even recognized, by the less informed among mankind, is that substance called the Holy Spirit**" (*Ibid.*, p. 39).
- **Incorrect because**
  - In the Bible the original Greek words that were translated "Holy Ghost" were also translated "Holy Spirit."  
*[hagios=holy; pneuma=spirit]*
  - Therefore, no legitimate distinction can be made between the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit for the words refer to the same Person.



# From the Mormon Bible dictionary

## • Holy Ghost

- Holy Ghost. The third member of the Godhead and, as the name implies, a personage of Spirit, not possessing a body of flesh and bones (D&C 130:21–22). The Holy Ghost has been manifest in every dispensation of the gospel since the beginning, being first made known to Adam (1 Ne. 10:17–22; Moses 6:51–68). . . . **The gift can come only after proper and authorized baptism, and is conferred by the laying on of hands**, as in Acts 8:12–25 and Moroni 2:1–3. The gift of the Holy Ghost is the right to have, whenever one is worthy, the companionship of the Holy Ghost. More powerful than that which is available before baptism, it acts as a cleansing agent to purify a person and sanctify him from all sin. Thus it is often spoken of as “fire” (Matt. 3:11; 2 Ne. 31:17; D&C 19:31).
- President Young taught that the Holy Ghost is “the special gift of the Father” (DBY, 160), **given according to our faithfulness**, and can teach us all things and lead us to perfection.
- **ALL Mormon views of Holy Spirit WRONG:**
  - As part of the Trinity
  - Part in Salvation Complete contradiction of Bible: See additional handout





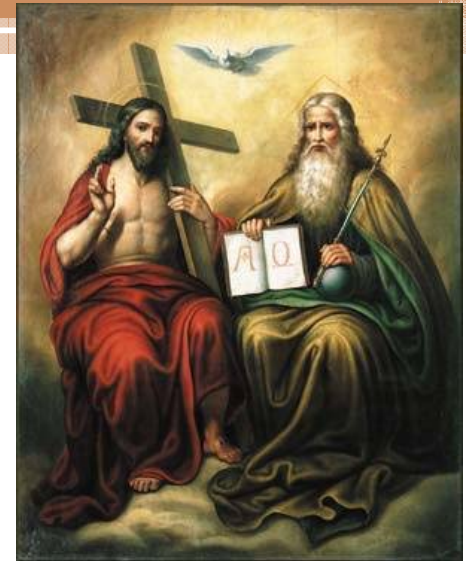
# God the Holy Spirit is a person

- The Holy Spirit engages in **personal relations**
  - Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.(Acts 8:29),
- Has the attributes of personality: **intellect**
  - And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Rom.8:27)
- **Emotions:**
  - But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.(Isa.63:10)
  - And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Eph.4:30)
- **Will:**
  - But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. (1 Cor.12:11).



# The personality of each of the three is therefore implied in Scripture

- Clear from the texts that each member of the Trinity is a person
- In addition, in their personhood *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct from each other and interact with each other*
- **The Father and the Son know each other**
  - All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. (Matt. 11:27)
- **Love each other**
  - The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand (John 3:35)
- **Speak to each other**
  - John 11:<sup>41</sup> Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. <sup>42</sup> And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.



# Jesus Baptism

- At the baptism of Jesus we witness one of the clearest pictures of the Trinity.
- Matthew 3:16–17 says, *“When Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my [Father] beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.’”*
- All three persons of the Trinity are present, and each one is doing something different: the Father is speaking, and the Son is being anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be the Messiah and missionary.

▫ Driscoll, Mark; Breshears, Gerry (2010-03-19). *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*





# Conclusion

In keeping with the methodology enunciated earlier—*compare, classify, and correlate various bits of evidence, and then draw theological inferences from them*—we conclude that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who together comprise the one God, are distinct persons and not modes of manifestation.

- To come to any other conclusion would necessitate contradicting one or more explicit or implicit truths found in the Bible
- Amazing benediction by Paul, former Pharisee, OT Jew:
  - *May 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**