

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 for evidence for, or against, the Trinity.

1 Corinthians 1:1 - “An apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God.” - God and Jesus are presented as entirely separate and distinct individuals. Why is the holy Spirit not mentioned here?

1 Corinthians 1:2 - “To the church of God in Corinth and to those sanctified in

Christ Jesus.” - Two distinct beings - God and Jesus are mentioned, but no holy Spirit, or Trinity, here. Why?

1 Corinthians 1:3 - “from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” - Again, God and Jesus are presented as entirely separate and distinct individuals.. And, once again, no greetings from the holy Spirit or the Trinity are mentioned. Of course, the holy Spirit is real, even though it is not mentioned here. If God and Jesus were part of a Trinity, as is claimed, this would be a logical place to mention the holy Spirit, and/or Trinity, in these opening greetings.

1 Corinthians 1:4 - “I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus.” - No holy Spirit, nor any Trinity or duality, is mentioned here.

1 Corinthians 1:6 - “God thus confirming our testimony about Christ concerning you.” God and Jesus are separate and distinct. No holy spirit or Trinity is mentioned.

1 Corinthians 1:9 - “God is faithful who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” - Two individuals named, God and Jesus, but no Holy Spirit, or Trinity.

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.” - Jesus comes from God, but is not God. God does not come from Jesus.

If the holy Spirit was a person, and also if the Trinity really existed, it would seem like we should have seen 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 - “This God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God” (NAB). In this very first mention of the

holy spirit in 1 Corinthians, it is called **“the Spirit,”** or **“his spirit” (NIV)**. This language 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” 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.

1 Corinthians 2:16 - **“Who has known the mind of the Lord?... But we have the mind of Christ.”** - “The Lord” here is Almighty God the Father. There are distinctive differences between God and Jesus. The holy spirit is not mentioned here, not because it is not real, but because it is not a person, but is God’s **“power” (Acts 1:8)**. The Trinity is not mentioned because it is not real.

1 Corinthians 3:23 - **“You are of Christ and Christ is of God.”** - Christ comes from God the Father. He said, **“I came from God” (John 8:42 NAB)**. He is **“the firstborn of all creation” (Colossians 1:15 ESV; NASB; NAB; KJV)**. Jesus had a beginning to his life, so he has not been eternal, which means he is not God.

1 Corinthians 4:1 - **“As servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed.”** - Two separate, distinct individuals are mentioned, “Christ,” and “God.” Notice, however, that it is God who has revealed the “mysteries”, not Christ. God here is **“the Father”**, who Jesus said **“is greater than”** he is.

1 Corinthians 5:7 - **“For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed.”** - Christ was sacrificed, not God. **“God . . . never dies” (Habakkuk 1:12 NJB)**. Jesus **“was dead”**

(Revelation 1:18), so Jesus can't be God.

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.

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)** - An obvious distinction is here made here between God, who is “the Creator of all things”, and ‘Jesus Christ, through whom God created everything’.

1 Corinthians 10:4 - **“that rock was Christ”** (“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 superior (“the head”) over Christ.” Trinitarians sometimes claim that Jesus 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 that point, and thereafter.

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 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

“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).

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.

1 Corinthians 15:3 - “Christ died for our sins.” – God didn’t, because, **“Yahweh . . . God . . . never dies” (Habakkuk 1:12 NJB).** Since “Christ died”, he cannot be God, and he has not been eternal, which are two of the main pillars of the Trinity dogma.

1 Corinthians 15:4 - “He was buried, and he was raised on the third day.” – Jesus was resurrected, because he **“was dead” (Revelation 1:18).** God can’t die. **“Yahweh . . . God . . . never dies” (Habakkuk 1:12 NJB).** Jesus, however, **“was dead” (Revelation 1:18).**

1 Corinthians 15:5 - **“He appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve” (NAB)** - Thus confirmed Jesus isn't God. How did he “appear” to Peter? **“The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon” (Luke 24:34 NAB)**. He appeared to Peter after he was resurrected from the “dead” (**Revelation 1:18**). God can't die (**Habakkuk 1:12**), but Jesus did, so Jesus cannot be God.

1 Corinthians 15:24 - **“Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father” (NAB)**. **“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**).

1 Corinthians 15:27,28 - **“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)**. God has never been subjected to the Son, but the Son is subjected to the Father. This means that God **“is greater than” (John 14:28) “the Son,”** into all future eternity, which eliminates any supposed equality between them. Without equality, there is no Trinity.

1 Corinthians 15:45 - **“It is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living being,’ the last Adam a life-giving spirit” (NAB)**. 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”.

1 Corinthians 15:50 - **“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.”** This verse adds further evidence against the notion that Jesus was resurrected with a physical body and went into heaven with that physical body. The verse 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, not Jesus, or the holy Spirit, thus showing God the Father’s superiority. God, the superior, operates through Jesus.

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 in this verse 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.