

The Three-Gods Lie

How the Watchtower Misrepresents the Doctrine of the Trinity

By Robert M. Bowman Jr.

*When anyone is replying to a matter before he hears [it],
that is foolishness on his part and a humiliation. (Prov. 18:13 NWT)*

You must not testify falsely as a witness against your fellowman. (Ex. 20:16 NWT)

As is well-known, the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity maintains that there is absolutely one and only one God. The creeds are adamant in their affirmation of this point and in their denial of the heresy that the three persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three Gods. On several occasions the publications of the Jehovah's Witnesses, when criticizing the doctrine of the Trinity, have correctly quoted from the creeds, especially the Athanasian Creed, where the creeds make this affirmation of only one God. Despite the Society's documented knowledge of what the doctrine of the Trinity really teaches, it frequently asserts that the doctrine affirms the existence of three gods. So far I have found at least 25 separate instances of a Watchtower publication falsely stating that the doctrine of the Trinity teaches the existence of three gods.

In this paper, I simply quote the Watchtower publications where they make this false accusation. All quotations are taken from publications dating from 1950 or more recently, although the opening passages contain quotations from an 1882 *Watchtower* (documenting that this false accusation has been made throughout the history of the Watchtower Society). I have found this lie in publications as recent as 1998. By repeatedly characterizing the doctrine of the Trinity in this false way, the Watchtower consistently misrepresents the doctrine as pagan in origin and character. Honest students of Christian doctrine would not repeatedly engage in such flagrant misrepresentation. No further commentary is needed, since the misrepresentations speak for themselves. For ease of reference, the language of "three Gods" or "gods" is highlighted in boldface type; any other emphasis is in the original.

1882

Building on this foundation, way back in 1882 these dedicated Bible students clearly stated in the *Watch Tower*: "Our readers are aware that while we believe in Jehovah God and Jesus, and the holy Spirit, we reject as totally unscriptural, the teaching that these are **three Gods** in *one person*, or as some put it, *one God in three persons*."¹

¹"Insight that Jehovah Has Given," *Watchtower*, 15 March 1989. This 1882 statement is quoted also in "Championing Bible Truth!" *Watchtower*, 1 July 1979.

The *Watch Tower* of June 1882 stated: “Many pagan philosophers finding that it would be policy to join the ranks of the rising religion [an apostate form of Christianity endorsed by Roman emperors in the fourth century C.E.], set about paving an easy way to it by trying to discover correspondencies between Christianity and Paganism, and so to blend the two together. They succeeded only too well. . . . As the old theology had a number of chief gods, with many demi-gods of both sexes, the Pagan-christians (if we may coin a word) set themselves to reconstruct the list for the new theology. At this time, therefore, the doctrine of **three Gods** was invented—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.”²

1951

Rejecting the supremacy of Almighty God, orthodox religion champions a pagan doctrine of a **trinity of gods, not one supreme God, but three coequal ones.**³

1952

Not only would it be literally impossible for the Bible to have 50,000 such spurious passages in it but it would be impossible for the Bible to have 50,000 spurious texts such as 1 John 5:7, which speaks about **three gods’ being one.**⁴

The doctrine, in brief, is that there are **three gods in one**: “God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost,” all three equal in power, substance and eternity.⁵

1953

They try to induce people to believe in a trinity of **three equal gods in one**; but the Bible says Jehovah is supreme and Christ Jesus is, not his equal, but his Son.⁶

1961

A “Holy Trinity” of **three Gods in one God** is also worshiped by most Catholic and Protestant sects, this having first been adopted as Catholic doctrine at the Nicene Council of A.D. 325.⁷

1962

Christendom has copied the heathen, pagan nations of Asia in teaching that God is a trinity, **three Gods in one Person.**⁸

² *Jehovah’s Witnesses—Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom* (1993), chap. 10.

³ “Put Off Every Weight,” *Watchtower*, 1 Jan. 1951.

⁴ “Subtly Discrediting God’s Word,” *Watchtower*, 1 July 1952.

⁵ “*Let God Be True*” (1952 rev. ed.), 100.

⁶ “Integrity Leads to Life,” *Watchtower*, 1 March 1953.

⁷ “Finding Joy for Everlasting Life,” *Watchtower*, 15 Feb. 1961.

⁸ “Christendom Has Failed God! After Her End, What?” *Watchtower*, 15 April 1962.

1963

Others hold that the Creator, Jesus and “the Holy Ghost” are a **trinity of three Gods in one**, and that Jesus was actually a God-man while on earth.⁹

What about the trinity doctrine of **three gods in one**, the immortality of the human soul, purgatory, a hell of torment for the wicked? Are these Bible teachings or human traditions?¹⁰

Let it be noticed that Jesus Christ, when quoting Moses’ words, did not say that Jehovah was a **triad of Gods**, like the triads of deities in ancient Babylon. Jesus did not say, ‘Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our Gods [*Theoi*] is one Jehovah.’ Jesus did not interpret Moses’ words and quote Moses as saying, ‘Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our Gods [*Theoi*], Jehovah is three.’ He did not say that there were three Jehovahs and that he himself was one of such three Jehovahs. Mark 12:29 tells us that Jesus simply said: “Jehovah our God [*Theos*] is one Jehovah.” The whole *Theos*, the whole *Elohím*, is Jehovah. Jehovah is the whole *Theos*, the whole *Elohím*, the whole God. Jehovah is not sharing worship with **two other Gods** in a triad. Jehovah demands a devotion that is exclusive of other gods, from a heart not divided in love between **three gods**.¹¹

1964

Let it be noticed that Jesus Christ did not interpret Moses’ words and quote Moses as saying, ‘Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our Gods [*Theoi*] is three.’ He did not say that there were three Jehovahs and that he himself was one of such three Jehovahs. Jesus simply said: “Jehovah our God [*Theos*] is one Jehovah.” Jehovah is the whole *Theos*, the whole *Elohím*, the whole God. Jehovah is not sharing worship with **two other Gods** in a Babylonish triad.¹²

It amazes the Mohammedans when we tell them we do not believe in the “trinity,” or **three gods in one**.¹³

1970

It may be necessary for us to teach those with whom we study the Bible how to reason on Scripture texts. For example, Mark 12:29 might be read: “Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.” Ask the student, “How many Jehovahs are there?” Let him answer. The answer is obvious that there is only one Jehovah. When he discerns this, you have caused him to register an important fact in his mind that he might otherwise have missed. Help him to appreciate further what this means to him. Reason with him, perhaps in this way: “If he is one Jehovah, then

⁹“Religion and the Nuclear Age,” *Watchtower*, 1 Aug. 1963.

¹⁰“The Bible, Tradition and Your Worship,” *Watchtower*, 15 Aug. 1963.

¹¹*Babylon the Great Has Fallen—God’s Kingdom Rules!* (1963), chap. 5.

¹²“A Nation Holds a Land in Trust for God,” *Watchtower*, 1 Aug. 1964.

¹³“Devoted to Jehovah and the Ministry,” *Watchtower*, 15 Aug. 1964.

could he be **three gods**, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, as the Trinitarians teach?” Again, let him answer. “No, Jehovah could not be **three gods**, for the Bible plainly says he is one God.” Now, you have caused the student to think on a basic Scriptural truth and to understand that Jehovah is but one God. You have also exposed a basic false doctrine—the doctrine of the Trinity.¹⁴

1972

But my uncertainty turned to confusion when I tried to reason out the Trinity teaching. In reply to my query as to how **three gods** could exist in one, I was told that I could not understand this mystery.¹⁵

1973

It was then a surprise to learn that the churches of Christendom worship a trinity of **three gods in one**, very similar to the Hindu triune god Tri-Murti. I was very pleased to learn, though, that the Supreme God is not a trinity.¹⁶

1974

There are not **two or three Jehovahs**, only one! A so-called triune god or trinity is a pagan invention. It is a blasphemous falsehood.¹⁷

1975

Recently, a new publication entitled “The Religion of Isaac Newton” makes even clearer the profound respect this renowned scientist had for the Bible as God’s Word.... The review [in *Scientific American*] points out that Newton “cared nothing for the subtle substances of the Trinity [the unscriptural belief in **three coequal Gods in one**]. His all-powerful God was bound up with plain words, the words of Scripture, and not with philosophical abstractions.”¹⁸

1981

During the past 100 years there has been an exposing of the false gods of this world, even of Christendom.... This has included the exposure of Christendom’s own god, the so-called Trinity, inexplicably made up of **three gods in one** and each of these deities being coexistent, coequal and coeternal.¹⁹

¹⁴“Building Disciples Having the Qualities of Endurance,” *Watchtower*, 1 April 1970.

¹⁵“I Was an African ‘Country Doctor,’” *Awake!* 8 March 1972.

¹⁶“I Grew Up as a Hindu,” *Awake!* 8 July 1973.

¹⁷*Eternal Purpose* (1974), chap. 3.

¹⁸“Insight on the News,” *Watchtower*, 1 Nov. 1975.

¹⁹“The Judgment Day of the Gods,” *Watchtower*, 15 July 1981.

1984

Their worship is not distributed to **three gods in one**, the so-called godhead of some mysterious Trinity, but they are united as the one people who worship the one God, Jehovah.²⁰

1988

The **three-gods-in-one** concept was widely held in the pagan world. The ancient Romans had temples with groups of three cells “dedicated to a triad of divinities associated in beliefs and worship.... Thus, Christendom has chosen to ‘walk after another god,’ the trinitarian god, that was totally unknown to the Jews and to Christ and true Christians.”²¹

1989

Now, consider for a moment some of the major religions of today. Do you know of any that teach that the human soul is immortal, that teach that God is a trinity of **three gods in one**, that allow immorality among its members to go unchallenged, that meddle in politics, or that have members who are more willing to sacrifice their lives to a god of war than to the God of peace? If so, then you have recognized modern daughterlike organizations of Babel, still propagating religious holdovers from the days of Nimrod’s tower.²²

1995

Thomas was born in Asmara, Eritrea, and grew up a devout Catholic. At the age of 15, he entered a monastery. He asked the abbot: “How is it possible that one God is **three Gods?**” The abbot answered: “Because we accept what the pope says about spiritual things. Above all, this is a mystery, and you are too young to grasp it.” After five years in the monastery, Thomas left, disillusioned and frustrated by the conduct and the teachings of the church.²³

Therefore, those who accept the Bible as God’s Word do not worship a Trinity consisting of **three persons or gods in one.**²⁴

1998

Isaiah was foretelling a dereliction of duty on the part of religious leaders. For instance, they do not teach Bible truth but teach their flocks unscriptural doctrines regarding eternal torment in a fiery hell, a trinity of **three gods in one**, and immortality of the soul—all of pagan origin.²⁵

²⁰“United in Worship under Our Shepherd-King,” *Watchtower*, 1 March 1984.

²¹“Christendom Exposed as the Promoter of False Worship,” *Watchtower*, 1 April 1988, 19, 20.

²²“Religion’s Future in View of Its Past, Part 2: 2369-1943 B.C.E.—A Hunter, a Tower, and You!” *Awake!* 22 Jan. 1989.

²³“Reaching All Kinds of People in Modern-Day Athens,” *Watchtower*, 15 Oct. 1995.

²⁴*The Knowledge that Leads to Everlasting Life* (1995), chap. 3.

²⁵“What Jesus Is Now,” *Awake!* 8 Dec. 1998, 11.