

TITLE: Satisfaction in the Sovereign Source of Our Salvation (Part 11)

Satisfaction in the Trinity

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 1:2 and Selected Scriptures

THEME: The Doctrine of the Trinity from 1 Peter 1:2 and John 1:1

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Read Passage

Main idea ==>

Our Hope is Found in the Electing Grace of the Father, the Sanctifying Grace of the Spirit, and the Saving Grace of the Son.

I. Hope in The Sovereign Source of Our Salvation

A. Selected by the Father (1:2a)

B. Sanctified by the Spirit (1:2b)

C. Saved for Service by the Son (1:2c)

Father Elects; Spirit Sanctifies; Son Saves. We've said that this is t/cruc of where our hope lies as believers in JC. Trinity is foundational to all that==>

D. Parenthesis: Satisfaction in the Trinity

If our Hope is Found in the Triune God then we must know and love Him in His Triunity.

If we must know and love Him in His Triunity then we must know about His Triunity.

If we must know and love Him in His Triunity then we must believe in His Triunity.

3. Hairsplitting or Heresy? (Arianism and Modalism & Confusion, Oh My!)

a. Modalism/Sebellianism/Modalistic monarchianism/ Jesus Only/ Oneness/Patrispassionism

This is a common view that denies t/Trinity by claiming that t/difference between t/Father, Son, HS is one of different manifestations of t/Father.

Modalism denies a distinction of persons in t/Godhead.

Rem. our definition: “God is one as to essence and three as to person.” According to Modalism, or Oneness theology, God is one as to essence and one as to person. The difference between t/F/S/HS is a matter of One God playing 3 different roles, like an actor changing between three different characters.

(1) Origin of this heresy

Actually goes back to 2nd or 3rd c. w/two men in Asia Minor: Praxeas and Noetus. But it was a man in Rome by name of Sabellius who really pushed t/movt. forward.

Sabellius claimed that t/Father himself is t/Son who took on flesh and also t/Holy Sprit who gives life & holiness. [Aquinas, 65]

Tertullian, t/CH father from N. Africa, opposed Sabellius & Sabellianism was roundly condemned by t/CH as heresy, culminating at Councils of Nicea in 325, Constantinople in 381, and Chalcedon in 451.

(2) False teaching is like a bad cold==>

<==you just can't seem to shake it! 100 yrs. ago this same heresy came to t/fore once again here in t/United States when t/Assemblies of God confronted 25% of their pastors who denied t/Trinity & t/bulk of these left t/denomination and formed their own groups which have persisted to today. They share a common denial of t/Trinity ==>

David K. Bernard, perhaps t/most prolific oneness writer==>

“The Bible does not teach the doctrine of the trinity, and Trinitarianism actually contradicts the Bible. It does not add any positive benefit to the Christian message. . . the doctrine of the trinity does detract from the important biblical themes of the oneness of God and the absolute deity of Jesus Christ.” [Oneness writer, David K. Bernard, cited in “The Trinity, the Definition of Chalcedon, and Oneness Theology” by James White]

(3) Here's the key for modalists:

Distinction between Jesus' humanity & deity (his 2 natures) is t/same as t/distinction between t/Father & t/Son. So, for X to be fully God & fully man means that he is fully t/Father & fully t/Son. Which is, as we will see, a perversion of t/incarnation & thus t/atonement.

(a) Can look at it this way

In orthodox theology we talk about JcT being t/eternal SOG. IOW - He was, is, always will be God t/Son, t/2d person of t/Trinity. 2k yrs. ago (Gal. 4:4) he took on flesh and became man, Fully God & fully Man.

Oneness proponents believe that Jesus is t/non-eternal SOG in that t/Son began at t/incarnation when t/Father became man.

The "Son" is the flesh, t/"Father" is t/God – & t/God (t/Father) took on flesh, & in effect became his own Son.

(b) So Jesus Christ is BOTH the Father and the Son

He is t/Father in His Deity & t/Son in His humanity. Being both F & S, J. could alternate between his 2 natures. This, for modalists, is how you understand t/"difficult" Scriptures.

Sometimes J. is acting as t/Son (man) & sometimes as t/Father (God). When you see Jesus acting or speaking, according to Oneness writers, t/exegetical or interpretational key is asking t/? "Is he acting as t/Father or as t/Son (God or a man)?"

In t/Garden of Gethsamane, when Jesus prayed to t/Father he was acting in t/role of t/Son (man). When he raised Lazarus from t/dead, he was acting in t/role of t/Father (God).

When he was hungry or thirsty or tired, that was Jesus acting as t/Son. When he performed miracles or forgave sin, he was acting as t/Father.

The problem is that this portrays Jesus as a Jekyll& Hyde character who could sleep 1 moment because his humanity was tired, then calm a raging storm t/next, acting, now, not as t/Son, but as t/Father.

This is in contradiction to orthodoxy which has historically maintained that Jesus has two natures but acts as one person.

So, as crazy as it sounds, Jesus was & is both t/Father who loved & sent his Son & t/Son who loved & obeyed t/Father. He was both t/Son who prayed to t/Father & t/Father who answered t/Son. He was both t/man who was forsaken at t/cross & t/God who appeared to forsake t/man.

(c) Here is the issue & the error

Relationship between t/Father & t/Son is not a relationship between the two natures of one person. Jesus wasn't a schizoid who had two natures w/i him communicating to one another. In fact, natures don't communicate; persons do! Yet, for those who hold to modalism, Jesus becomes two persons w/i himself (ancient heresy of Nestorianism).

(4) As far as this sermon series on the Trinity is concerned

Have to look at it as a unit. Cumulative weight of all t/evidence that we have addressed speaks for itself. So while we will have spent two weeks on Modalism, it has been addressed almost from t/start. Back in t/second or third week we looked at t/distinction between t/persons of t/Father, Son & H.S. - that it is biblical suicide to say that these are all t/same person when there is clearly a distinction between them.

(a) Here's some more evidence

Jesus is referred to as "The Son" over 200 x in t/NT and never once referred to as "The Father." Over 200 x "The Father" is referred to by Jesus or someone else as being clearly distinct from Jesus. Over 50 x juxtaposition/contrast of t/names of Jesus & the Father can be found in the same verse, such as in Romans 15:6==>

that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our

(5) “Those that are oneness or modalist must have some hooks upon which to hang their coats?”

What passages or verses to they use to support their position? We don't have time to look at all of them (really aren't that many). I want to take time to look at what seem to be t/top three.

(a) Isaiah 9:6

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

There it is, the name of Jesus is “Eternal Father” - so Jesus must be the Father! Not so fast, my name may be Bartolucci, but I'm not my dad!

There are a couple of different ways to look at this verse. 1) It may be referring to the “Fatherhood” of t/Messiah (descriptive) which does not mean that it is a title in t/sense of saying that He is “The Father.” 2) Isaiah's use of the Hebrew word “Ab” (father) has nothing to do w/the NT use of t/term Father as it is used as a title for t/First Person, The Father. Name “Father” wasn't not a common title for God in t/OT & wasn't used much by t/Jews until later in time. 3) These two nouns could be better translated “Father of eternity” which would reveal t/Messiah's role as Creator, the Lord of time & eternity (Col. 1). Lastly: Basic rule of biblical interpretation is: Never build a good doctrine on bad evidence (one verse, cf. 1 Cor. 15:29) - especially when the concept isn't taught elsewhere. This would not be a passage, everything considered, that you would appeal to prove that Jesus is same person as t/Father.

(b) John 14:7-10 {turn there}

Philip's question in v. 8 + Jesus response in v. 9 {read}

Let's add a little theological light on this. As far as Philip's question is

concerned [^] Jesus might well have said what John records earlier in 1:18 “No man has seen God (Father) at any time . . .”

God is essentially a spirit & cannot be seen unless He assumes a visible form & even then t/power of His glory & holiness would consume any who saw it (Exo. 33 - Moses, “Show me your glory” - “No man can see me and live!”)

That’s where the rest of John 1:18 comes in ==>

No man has seen God (the Father) at any time; [but] the only begotten God (the Son), who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

Explained = ἐξηγήεομαι (*explain, interpret, tell, report, describe*). Where we get t/word “exegesis.” (In-depth study of a biblical passage where you look at language, history, context, grammar & t/like). Jesus has exegeted t/Father for us!

Have to ask t/Question, “How would t/disciples have understood this?” If I were talking to someone & said regarding a family business transaction, “I can’t make a decision until I clear it with my father” & someone asks, “Can we meet your father?” I reply, “Hey, if you’ve seen me you’ve seen my father” they aren’t going to think I’m my own father! No! they’re going to think that we are very much alike in our personalities and character. Jesus is certainly saying more than that here; He and the Father are of the same identical essence as God. (1 as to essence, 3 as to person).

If you go beyond this passage & look at t/context there is no way that Jesus was saying that he was the same Person as the Father (implied in t/Titles Father/Son). Look at: v. 1-2, 6-7, 12, 16, 23.

BTW - might also note vv. 10-11 (perichoresis). Isn’t saying that the Father is in the father! Could it be any clearer that Jesus, the Father & t/Spirit are distinct persons?

(c) John 10:30

Certainly in saying that Jesus and the Father are “One” Jesus is saying that He and the Father are the same person? Right? Wrong! In fact, this verse supports t/Trinity, especially when you look at it in the Grk. text. Jesus uses the 1st person neuter plural of εἶμι (to be). Lit. ==> “I and the Father, we are one (in essence).” Rem. “God is one as to essence, three as to person.”

Also a wonderful OT twist to this. The Law required that at least two persons serve as witnesses to legal matters (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; Matt. 18:16). Turn to John chapter 8 (vv. 12-18).

John 5:31-32 “If I *alone* bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. “There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears of Me is true. (two witnesses).

Also add Jesus’ baptism (Matt. 3) & transfiguration (Matt. 17). At Jesus’ baptism, you have THREE witnesses, F/S,HS.

Concept of having 2 or 3 witnesses to legal matters which comes out so richly completely unravels apart from t/Trinity.

Oneness writers have picked up on this and claim that the two witnesses are the two natures of Jesus. Try that in court sometime. Judge: “So, you claim you are innocent. Do you have any witnesses?” Reply, “Your honor, I do. My body and my spirit both testify that I am not guilty.” Even Johnnie Cochran & Alan Dershiwitz can’t get you out of that one. “If the Trinity does not fit you CANNOT acquit!”

(6) As Long as We’re in John’s Gospel - Turn to John 1

1:1-18 is a prologue to the entire Gospel and all orthodox theologians, exegetes, and expositors agree that this passage w/o question proves t/deity and preexistence of the second person of the Trinity. I called this passage a slam-dunk against both heresies of Arianism (denial of Jesus’

deity) & Modalism (upholds his deity but denies t/Triunity).

Only have time to look at verse one . . .

(a) Verse One {read}

i. Greek word that's translated the "Word"(twice in v. 1)
is **λογος**

What this v. is saying that t/Logos was w/God & was God. Some will claim that the **λογος** isn't a person, but an idea or concept (goes back to Gk. philosophy); laughable. Masc. personal p.ns. used t/o (v. 2/he, 3/him/him, 4/him) ==> end of passage. We're talking about a person, context tells us that this person is JC, the Son of God, himself God.

Watchtower people claim that t/verse should be translated [read]. No reputable Gk. scholar would agree that for reasons we will see. But the wording, as inspired by t/HS, is perfectly succinct. Called by some a "lit. masterpiece."

ii. Difference between Greek and English

English is a language built on word order. IOW - we don't say "And ran to the dog the man" (not unless you have been dipping into the cooking sherry or you haven't slept much all night like me!). English depends on word order. Normally, we structure our sentences w/subject or predicate first, then t/verb, then the object ("The brown dog bit a man"). Subject, "dog" - predicate nominative "brown" - - verb "bit" & an object "a man" (Roger, you listening?!).

Koine Greek does not depend on word order. Might be imp. for emphasis, but not for understanding the parts of the sentence (one reason why it's difficult for native Eng. speakers to learn...). Structure in Gk. is determined by case endings & articles (def. or indef.) & verb tenses & t/like, not word order. So, in Gk could have "And ran to the dog the

man” (perfectly sober!).

iii. All this to say ==>

Lit. in t/Gk. text, v. 1 reads καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. (and God was the Word). We have what is called a predicate nominative construction, the passage is telling us what the Word (nominative/subject) is like as to nature (here, God).

iv. Little word that could - word “was” 4x {read}

In English we don’t think much of this word. In fact, I take it so much for granted that when I was looking at it (W-A-S) it started to look a bit strange to me, like it was misspelled or I had never seen it before (what’s was?). BUT IN THE GREEK HERE IN JOHN 1 the word is essential. It tells us something about ‘The Word’ - how long the Person of the Word existed.

Rem. Arius, the heretic of the 3d c. who said of JC “There was a time when He was not.” This word “was” speaks to that very issue. The word was in this verse is in the imperfect tense. This is continuous action in the past. If you look at v. 3 you see a diff. word in a diff. tense - t/word “ἔγενετο” translated “came into being” {read}. Aorist = simple past-tense. This word gives us a point of reference - something happened in time - The Word Created. But the word “was” in the imperfect tense doesn’t contain this element. There is no point of origin; it doesn’t tell us when. Doesn’t tell us when because there is no when.

As one scholar puts it==>

“... as far back as you wish to put ‘the beginning,’ [v. 1a] the Word is already in existence. The Word does not come into existence at the ‘beginning,’ but is already in existence when the ‘beginning’ takes place. If we take the beginning of John 1:1, the Word is already there. If we push it back further (if one can even do so!), say, a year, the Word is already there. A thousand years, the Word is there. A billion years, the Word is there.” [White, 51]

What’s the point of all this? What is John BWO H.S. telling us? THAT THE WORD IS ETERNAL. New English Bible puts it this way==>

“When all things began, the Word already was.”

v. There’s More - The Word is eternal (yes) but not alone

Next phrase of 1:1 tells us something else: While the Word (JC) is eternal, He was not alone in eternity. It says that ==>

... **the Word was WITH God** ...

The word “with” is the Grk. preposition $\pi\rho\omicron\varsigma$ (also used in v. 2). $\pi\rho\omicron\varsigma$ like many words, has a wide range of meanings. In this context, the word speaks of relationship, even intimacy. Same word that TAP uses in 1 Cor. 13:12 when he talks about how our knowledge of t/truth is somewhat dim in this life, but one day it will be clear==>

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face . . .

The word “to” that’s between the words “face” and “face” is this Gk. prep. $\pi\rho\omicron\varsigma$. Intimacy/relationship. If we can extrapolate the idea back to John – The Word, JC, has had an eternal relationship w/God, The F.

Commenting on this passage, t/great Presbyterian Theologian, B.B. Warfield==>

“The language is pregnant [with meaning]. It is not merely coexistence with God that is asserted, as of two beings standing side by side . . . What is suggested is an active relation[ship] . . . From all eternity the Word has been with God as a fellow: He who in the very beginning already ‘was’, ‘was’ also in communion with God. . . . He was nevertheless not a separate being from God . . . In some sense distinguishable from God, He was in an equally true sense identical with [Him].” [The Person and Work of Christ, cited in White, 199]

In the beginning (parallel to Gen. 1:1) was the Word (eternally), and the Word was with God (relationship), AND THE WORD WAS GOD.

vi. Two Big Questions on this last phrase {read}

Why is it in the word order that it is in (Gk. not English) where we have: . . . and God was the Word.”

Why does the word “God” not have the definite article (“the”), but the “Word” does (it’s “The Word”, but it’s not “The God”).

*** Watchtower Witnesses and Others who Deny Deity of Christ (that He is Himself God) ==>**

Claim that because the word “God” does not have the def. article (“the”) before it, it should be translated “a god.” Of course, that begs the ? “what sort of lesser god is Jesus?” That’s not only theologically impossible, but it’s also grammatically impossible (why I said no recognized Gk. scholar would translate it that way). Just because a word doesn’t have t/def. article doesn’t mean it’s indefinite. Word $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ (God) is found many times in t/NT w/o t/def. article & never is it translated “a god” (cf. vv. 6,12,13,18).

*** It is commonly known that the structure here follows a regular rule of Greek Grammar known as “Colwell’s Rule”**
Absence of t/article shows that t/word $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ is t/predicate, rather than the subject, of the sentence. [Grudem, 234]

IOW - it’s telling us something about the nature/character/essence of t/Word, JC. Gk. scholar Kenneth Wuest puts it this way ==>

... and the Word was as to His essence absolute deity.

That’s also brought out by t/word order. This is why t/word “God” is 1st “And God was the Word” - emphasis. “What God was, the Word was also.

*** Take a Step Back (what we’ve learn so far)**

1. The Word is eternal

In the beginning was the Word . . . (imperfect tense)

2. The Word is personal

... **the Word was WITH God . . .** ($\pi\rho\omicron\varsigma$ - intimacy of relationship)

3. The Word is God

... **and the Word was God.** (pred. nom. - Word is of the same essence as God).

Remember==>

vi. Two Big Questions on this last phrase {read}

Why is it in the word order that it is in & why does the word “God” not have the definite article? This is where we nail it all down.

If this phrase would have been any different than what it is it would support either Arianism (denying t/deity of X) or Sabellianism (denying t/Trinity). The Word order and the structure only supports what we have been upholding all along: Trinitarianism.

*** Let’s look at how it would be translated . . .**

If, in the Greek text, it was==>

“And the Word was the God” (two def. articles) ==> modalism (telling us that the person of the word was the same person as the Father).

If, in the Greek text, it was ==>

“And the Word was God” (Gk. word order) ==> support the reading “And the Word was a god” (some kind of a lesser deity).

BUT IT’S NEITHER OF THOSE!

Here is what the H.S. inspired TAJ to write==>

“And God was the Word” - that is, “What God was, the Word was also.”
Or, as we have it in our English Bibles **“and the Word was God.”**

NT scholar Daniel Wallace: “Jesus Christ is God and has all the attributes the Father has, but He is not the First Person of the Trinity. All this is concisely confirmed in [the sentence structure of John 1:1].” [cited in Mounce, Basics of Biblical Greek, 29]

The word order tells us that JC has all of the essential attributes of the Father, the lack of the article tells us that he is not the same person as the

Father.

Does that fit our definition of the Trinity? “God is one as to essence, three as to person.”

As the great reformer Martin Luther remarked: “The lack of an article is against Sabellianism (modalism), the word order is against Arianism (watchtowerism).” [cited by Daniel Wallace in Mounce, Basics of Biblical Greek, 29]

Isn't knowing God's Word exciting?

We still haven't completely answered the question, “What Difference Does it Make?”

I think we have to a great degree; we've set the screws into the wood, we just haven't completely tightened them down. So, I'm sort of enjoying leaving you in suspense – for 3 weeks.

Again, remember where we began

Our Hope is Found in the Electing Grace of the Father, the Sanctifying Grace of the Spirit, and the Saving Grace of the Son.

Can't divorce truth from Hope

W/O truth hope becomes empty sentimentality. Sentiment didn't hang on t/cross for your sin, the sinless SOG did. That's hope; that's truth.