

THE HANDS OF GOD

One God. Three Persons. Each fully divine. HANDS gathers five kinds of evidence Scripture itself uses to mark out who God is, and shows how Scripture applies every one of them to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

H	HONORS	Worship and glory owed to God alone
A	ATTRIBUTES	Qualities that belong to God alone
N	NAMES	Divine titles and the covenant name
D	DEEDS	Works only God performs
S	SEAT	The throne God alone occupies

H HONORS Worship and glory owed to God alone

FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
Revelation 4:11: worthy of glory, honor, and power as Creator. Isaiah 42:8: "My glory I give to no other." God will not hand his glory to a creature. Watch who receives it in the next two columns.	John 5:23: all must honor the Son "just as they honor the Father." John 17:5: asks for the glory he shared with the Father before the world existed, the glory God will not give away. Philippians 2:9-11: every knee bows, every tongue confesses Jesus is Lord. From Isaiah 45:23, owed to God alone. Hebrews 1:6: the angels are commanded to worship him. Revelation 5:13-14: every creature says "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might," and the elders fall down and worship.	Matthew 28:19: baptism is into the one name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You are not baptized into God plus a power. 2 Corinthians 13:14: Paul's blessing asks grace from Christ, love from God, and fellowship from the Spirit. Three names, one breath.

SOURCE HANDS framework adapted from Robert M. Bowman Jr. and J. Ed Komoszewski, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007). The original applies the five categories to the Son; the Father and Holy Spirit columns here are an adaptation. Scripture quotations follow the ESV.

A ATTRIBUTES Qualities that belong to God alone

FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
Psalm 90:2: "from everlasting to everlasting you are God." Eternal. Jeremiah 23:24: "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" Omnipresent. Malachi 3:6: "I the LORD do not change." Immutable. Psalm 147:5: "his understanding is beyond measure." Omniscient.	John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17: he existed before all things and holds all things together. Whatever made all things is not one of them. Eternal. John 21:17: "Lord, you know everything." Revelation 2:23: "I am he who searches mind and heart," the LORD's prerogative in Jeremiah 17:10. Omniscient. Matthew 28:20: "I am with you always, to the end of the age." Omnipresent. Hebrews 1:3: upholds the universe by the word of his power. Omnipotent. Hebrews 13:8: "the same yesterday and today and forever." Immutable.	Hebrews 9:14: called "the eternal Spirit." Eternal. Psalm 139:7: "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?" Omnipresent. 1 Corinthians 2:10-11: searches "the depths of God." No one knows God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. He knows God as God knows himself. Omniscient. 1 Corinthians 12:11: hands out God's gifts "to each one individually as he wills." He decides; no one directs him.

N NAMES Divine titles and the covenant name

FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
Exodus 3:14: "I AM WHO I AM." Exodus 3:15: "This is my name forever." The self-existent covenant name, YHWH. Isaiah 42:8: "I am the LORD; that is my name." The covenant name belongs to God alone. Watch where the New Testament puts it.	John 8:58: "Before Abraham was, I am." Verse 59 shows how they heard it: they pick up stones. John 20:28: Thomas calls the risen Jesus "My Lord and my God," and Jesus accepts it. Isaiah 9:6: named "Mighty God," Hebrew <i>El Gibbor</i>, the title Isaiah gives the LORD himself in 10:21. Titus 2:13: "our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." One person, both titles. Romans 10:13: "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved," quoting Joel 2:32, where the name is YHWH. In verse 9, the Lord confessed is Jesus.	Acts 5:3-4: Ananias lied "to the Holy Spirit," then "You have not lied to man but to God." Same act; the Spirit named as God. Hebrews 3:7-11: "as the Holy Spirit says," then the LORD's own first-person speech from Psalm 95: "I swore in my wrath." Hebrews 10:15-17: "the Holy Spirit also bears witness," then quotes Jeremiah 31, ending "declares the LORD." Matthew 28:19: one "name," singular, shared by all three. The Greek repeats the article, so the three stay distinct.

D DEEDS Works only God performs. One work, three persons: from the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit.

FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Isaiah 45:5-7: forms light and creates darkness, "I am the LORD, who does all these things," as the only God.	John 1:3; Colossians 1:16: "All things were made through him." Mark 2:5-10: forgives sins outright. The scribes reason correctly that "who can forgive sins but God alone." Jesus does not correct them; he proves the claim. John 5:21-22: gives life to whom he will "just as" the Father does, and has all judgment, a work Scripture reserves for God (Genesis 18:25). The same work, not a lesser copy.	Genesis 1:2: the Spirit of God hovering over the waters at creation. Psalms 104:30: "When you send forth your Spirit, they are created." Job 33:4: "The Spirit of God has made me." Elihu says it about his own creation. John 3:5-8: gives new birth, a work no one can perform on himself or anyone else. Romans 8:11: God raises the dead "through his Spirit who dwells in you." The agent of resurrection life.

S SEAT The throne God alone occupies

FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
Psalms 47:8: "God sits on his holy throne." Isaiah 6:1: Isaiah sees "the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." Isaiah 37:16: "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone."	Hebrews 1:3, 8: seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and the Father addresses him, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever." Revelation 22:1, 3: one throne for both, called "the throne of God and of the Lamb." One throne, not two. John 12:41: Isaiah spoke as he did "because he saw his glory and spoke of him," meaning Christ.	Acts 28:25-27: Paul gives the throne-room commission to the Spirit, "the Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah," then quotes Isaiah 6:9-10. In Isaiah, the speaker is the enthroned Lord. 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19: you are God's temple because God's Spirit dwells in you. The temple is where God sits enthroned above the cherubim (Isaiah 37:16, first column).

One throne, three witnesses. Isaiah 6:1, Isaiah sees the Lord enthroned. John 12:41, John says Isaiah spoke so because he saw the glory of Christ. Acts 28:25, Paul says the Holy Spirit was right in saying those very words. One vision, one enthroned Lord, and the New Testament attributes it to the Son and to the Spirit without splitting the throne between them.

THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD

The first three sheets show that Scripture treats the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit the way it treats God. That raises the obvious question: **if all three are fully God, how many Gods are there?** Scripture answers plainly, and never once lets the number go past one.

Deuteronomy 6:4	"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." The Shema, Israel's daily confession.
Isaiah 44:6; 45:5	"I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god." "I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."
1 Kings 8:60	Solomon prays that all peoples may know "that the LORD is God; there is no other."
Mark 12:29-32	Jesus himself quotes the Shema as the first commandment, and the scribe agrees: "he is one, and there is no other besides him." Jesus does not correct him; verse 34 says he answered wisely.
1 Corinthians 8:4-6	"there is no God but one." Paul then splits the Shema across two persons , giving <i>God</i> to the Father and <i>Lord</i> to Jesus: "one God, the Father, from whom are all things ... and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things." A first-century Jew does not write that sentence unless he means it. He adds no second God.
1 Timothy 2:5	"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
James 2:19	"You believe that God is one; you do well." Then James adds that the demons believe it too, and shudder. Believing it is the starting line, not the finish.

SO WHAT DOES "PERSON" MEAN?

It is the church's word, borrowed to say something ordinary language had no word for. **It does not mean three separate people with three separate minds**, the way you and the person beside you are two people. It means the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are really distinct and are not each other: the Father sends, the Son is sent, the Spirit is sent by both, and they speak to and about one another.

That is not a set of roles taken up for a while. The Son asks for the glory he shared with the Father *before the world existed* (John 17:5). Three who are genuinely distinct, sharing one undivided life, and one God.

Hold both sentences at once. There is exactly one God. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and they are not each other. The evidence on Sheets 01 through 03 adds no one to the count; it tells you *who the one God is*. Every ancient error came from letting go of one of those sentences to make the other easier. Sheet 06 shows what happens.

IS THE SPIRIT A PERSON, OR A POWER?

Everything before this assumes the Spirit is a *someone*, not a *something*. If he were an impersonal force, the evidence would prove only that God is powerful, which no one disputes. **A force has no name to be lied to, no will of its own, and no grief.**

Speaks as "I"	Acts 13:2: "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."
Has a will	1 Corinthians 12:11: apportions gifts "to each one individually as he wills."
Teaches and testifies	John 14:26; 15:26; 16:8, 13: teaches and reminds, bears witness, convicts, guides into all truth.
Forbids	Acts 16:6-7: forbade them to speak in Asia; "the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them."
Intercedes	Romans 8:26-27: "the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words."
Can be wronged	Lied to, Acts 5:3 . Grieved, Ephesians 4:30 with Isaiah 63:10 . Resisted, Acts 7:51 . Outraged, Hebrews 10:29 , "outraged the Spirit of grace."
Distinct from Father and Son	John 14:16: "another Helper," sent by the Father, testifying about the Son. Matthew 3:16-17: the Son in the water, the Spirit descending, the Father speaking, all at once.

Put the two halves together. Sheets 01 through 03 show that Scripture treats the Spirit the way it treats God. This sheet shows he is a person, not a thing. Hold both and you have the church's confession: the Holy Spirit is not God's influence at work in the world, he is God himself at work in the world, and he is not the Father and not the Son.

FOUR WAYS TO GET THIS WRONG

Every ancient error came from holding one of the three claims and dropping another. The point of naming them is not to scare anyone. **It is that each one is corrected by a verse, not by a committee.**

Modalism

the "Oneness" view

One person playing three roles at different times, like one man who is a father, a son, and an employee.

Matthew 3:16-17, the Son is in the water, the Spirit descends, and the Father speaks, all in one moment. **John 17:5**, the Son prays to the Father about a glory they shared before the world existed. You cannot pray to yourself, and a role cannot love a role.

Do not let the name confuse you. Sheet 04 is right that there is only one God. This view goes wrong on *how* the one God is Father, Son, and Spirit.

Arianism

The Son is the first and greatest created being, but not God.

John 1:3 and **Colossians 1:16**, all things were made through him. Whatever made all things is not one of them. **John 1:1**, he was with God and was God, before anything began.

Tritheism

Three divine beings who cooperate closely.

Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, and all of Sheet 04. Scripture never lets the number go past one.

Partialism

Each person is one part of God, and the three parts add up to God.

Colossians 2:9, "in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily." Not a portion. The whole. Each person is wholly God, and there is one God.

THE CONFESSION, IN ONE LINE

One God. Three persons. Undivided in essence, eternally distinct in person.

Not one person in three modes. Not three gods. Not three parts.

A word about the title. HANDS is a memory device for five categories of evidence. It is not a picture of God's being. God has no parts and is not assembled out of anything, and he is not divided into three.