

# The Trinity Delusion

An exposé of the doctrine of the Trinity

## John 1:15, 30

This is the one I spoke about when I said, "He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me." (NIV).

### The Trinitarian Claim

Trinitarians claim that John 1:15 indicates pre-existed before John the Baptist existed.

Compare John 3:28

### The Claim vs. The Facts

The facts show that pre-existence is not even in view. John is referring to the fact that Jesus who is coming after John the Baptist will take precedence over John. John the Baptist will become less and Jesus will become greater.

### The Problem with the Claim

#### 1. John 1:30- A human being pre-existed before John?

An almost identical passage is cited by the Apostle John at John 1:30. But here John the Baptist explicitly states he is referring to **a human**. If we interpreted these verses as Trinitarians do, then it would mean that a human being named Jesus pre-existed John the Baptist. But that will not make any sense since a human being named Jesus did not exist prior to John. Jesus was born roughly 6 months after John the Baptist (Luke 1:26). This demonstrates to us that John was certainly not making any references to a pre-existent divine Jesus.

#### 2. *Opisō*

John refers to the One coming "after" him. The word commonly translated as "after" is *opisō*. It indicates Jesus was "behind" him. Jesus used the same word when he said, "**Follow** me" and when he said to Peter, "Get **behind** me Satan." The idea is that Jesus will follow after John; Jesus will come behind him.

He who is coming **after** me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove his sandals.  
Matthew 3:11 (see Mark 1:7)

#### 3. *Emprosthen*

This Greek word basically means "in front of." Notice what John says at John 3:28.

You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, "I am not the Christ," but, "I have been sent **ahead** (*emprosthen* of him."

*Opisō* and *emprosthen* are typically interpreted by Trinitarians to refer to position in chronological time. However, these words are being used to refer to position in space/location, not time. These



words primarily answer the question "where" not "when." Jesus came "behind" John because John was "in front of" Jesus.

#### 4. Prōtos

The word *protos* simply means "first." The word may be used to refer to first in time or first in rank in the sense of primacy or priority. Trinitarians simply default to a first in time interpretation without ever inquiring whether this is what John intended. However, when we review the context, it is clear that John is referring to status not time.

#### 4. Gegonen

The Greek word *gegonen* is a form of the Greek verb *ginomai*, "to be." It is in the perfect tense (past tense). Gegonen means "has become" or "has come to be." It is the same word used in verse 3 of this same chapter. This word has been variously translated in Trinitarian based translations. It quite simply means "has become."

### Analysis of the Facts

#### 1. The Greek Text

1:15	ho	opisō	mou	erchomenos	emprosthen	mou	gegonen	hoti	prōtos	mou	ēn
	the	behind	me	coming	in front	me	has	that	first	of	he
	one						become			me	was

The one after me coming has become in front of me of me since he was first of me. Notice that Jesus came to be in front of John in terms of priority. This shows that the Trinitarian interpretation does not make sense since they are interpreting the verse to mean Jesus has priority and preference because he had always been before John in time. However, we are being told Jesus came to be in front of, or ahead, of John.

#### 2. John 3:30

In chapter 3, John makes it perfectly clear what was intended.

No one can receive anything except what is given him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but I have been sent ahead (*emprosthen*) of him. He who has the bride is the bridegroom; the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice; therefore this joy of mine is now full. **He must increase, but I must decrease.**

At one point, John had been in front of/ahead (*emprosthen*) of Jesus. But John the Baptist tells us that he must decrease and Jesus must increase. In this way, Jesus then becomes ahead (*emprosthen*) of John as we read at John 1:15 and John 1:30.

#### 3. "first of me"

These words refer to the priority of Jesus and his ministry. Jesus always had a higher priority than John. John's ministry was simply to prepare people for Jesus' ministry and the work of the Father through Jesus. This was true long before John the Baptist was born since God had promised this Messiah to Israel. Jesus was the Lamb who "had been slain from the foundation of the world"



(Revelation 13:8). The Messiah's mission was always a higher priority than John the Baptist or his ministry.

However, it highly unlikely that John is referring to chronological time. The Greek word here can be used to refer to first in time or it can be used to refer to first in rank, superiority in importance. John 1:27 clarifies what John intended:

He who comes after me, **the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.**"

John clearly had superiority of importance in time when he uses the words "first of me." For this reason, Jesus *became* in front of John. John's ministry decreased and Jesus' ministry increased (Jn 3:28).

## Conclusion

When we sort out all the facts, it becomes very clear what is being said at John 1:15 and John 1:30 about this human being. John the Baptist is not saying anything about Jesus existing before he did. John had been "in front of" Jesus but Jesus will come to be "in front of John" since John will decrease and Jesus will increase. John's ministry was in front of Jesus' ministry but Jesus' ministry will supercede John's and will take priority over John's ministry. Since Jesus is the Messiah, his ministry had always been a higher priority than John's ("first of me"). Jesus superseded John because his ministry was superior and more important than John's. The text doesn't even allude to Jesus "pre-existing" John the Baptist.

**Last Revision/Update:** August 27, 2018

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John 1:15,30 - No pre-incarnate Jesus here



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