

# AN RESPONSE TO GWEN SHAMBLIN'S TEACHING REGARDING THE TRINITY.

By Chuck Gianotti, 9/22/2000

A ministry by Gwen Shamblin, called Weigh Down ministries has been widely followed by many who desire to gain control over their weigh and eating habits. This program involves a "discipleship" approach involving scripture and Christian disciplines and has met with wide acceptance and in many cases enthusiastic endorsement. For many it has given hope in a seemingly never ending battle with self-discipline and being overweight. Indeed, there is much practical and wise counsel in them. And we praise God for many who have found some degree of success through this program.

It is with great disappointment, that we have discovered serious doctrinal error in the ministry of Mrs. Shamblin. Her books, until now, have not been a source of controversy and we have not gone in search of this information with the intention of discrediting a nationally known figure. There is enough "celebrity bashing" as it is. And by surface appearances, Mrs. Shamblin's writings seemed to reflect an understanding of scripture that is somewhat consonant with the accepted parameters of the larger evangelical community.

However, we were quite surprised when someone recently passed along a copy of her statement on the doctrine traditionally known as the "Trinity." Particularly, she explains her belief that Jesus Christ is not God, thereby denying one of the most fundamental truths of scriptures. This is not just a small matter that small minds quibble over. Rather, this is fundamental to all of what God has done by "becoming flesh" and dying for us on the cross. I can think of no more fundamental error than one denying the full Deity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, God in the flesh!

One might point out: "But, this never comes up in her books." But, if Mrs. Shamblin is in error over such a basic concept as the fully Deity of Christ, then her teaching on Christian living must be suspect to the core. Christian living is sourced in the person of Jesus Christ, who is God in the flesh. Our success (or victory) depends upon the work of God in our lives. Jesus is not just an example of the disciple's life. He is The Life! If Christ is not God, then the ultimate success of the Christian life rests squarely on human efforts, rather than on the divine work of Jesus Christ in our lives. Our efforts, no matter how noble and disciplined, will not accomplish the godly life God desires for us. "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him." Colossians 2:6

In the following table, the left column contains Mrs. Shamblin's statement which was obtained from her web-site (<http://www.wdworkshop.com/>) as of the time of this writing. Superscript numbers have been inserted to direct the reader to my specific comments which are laid out in the right hand column. All my scripture references are from the NIV. My intention is not to destroy Mrs. Shamblin or her ministry—and I certainly do not want to idly cast stones. My sincere desire is to protect the flock of God from serious error and false teaching—and to reflect the Apostle Paul's attitude:

*"My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments." Colossians 2:2-4*

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<p>ESSENTIAL INTRODUCTION</p> <p>This document is to encourage you and help you to get even deeper into the Word of God. Please go to God's Word - the source of Truth - and preferably read the scriptures to which I refer. I believe that the Bible is infallible, and its description of God as the Father, Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God can be understood even when read by a child<sup>1</sup>. This subject is very important because when Jesus was praying to the Father, His goal was to make His position and God's position known. "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3).</p> <p>God is not trying to confuse us. That is the job of Satan. I have removed the three e-mails from our website archives so that I could consolidate all the material into this</p>	<p>1. If the subject is so simple, then students of the word have wasted huge amounts of time studying. In one single statement Mrs. Shamblin has disregarded the deliberations of godly Christians through the ages.</p>

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<p>one copyrighted document that you are welcome to download and distribute. This article is very pointed and strong - but my accusers have forced my hand. I do not visit the web-sites of other ministries and then make national negative<sup>2</sup> statements about them; I expect the same courtesy.</p> <p>My prayers are with you so that you can see God's word in the light that He wants Himself and His Son revealed. My statements have brought up questions such as "Do you believe in the Trinity?" People have asked me and my staff to answer this with "yes" or "no." This is not a "yes" or "no" question<sup>3</sup>, because we do not know if the inquirer is asking if we believe in the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit; if this is the case, then the answer of course is "YES!"<sup>4</sup> People asking this must not have read any of my materials to ask such questions. However, the inquirer may be asking if we believe in every word of the man-made teaching of the Trinitarian Creeds that were formed over 300 years past Christ and has been debated every since by many well-known theologians. I will make clear statements regarding this, using scriptures to support them.</p> <p>No matter what form you imagine God the Father, Jesus the Son, and His Spirit -- whether separate beings or if the three exist as on one throne -- remember that we are commanded not to argue about words. What is important is that you obey <i>His</i> words! There are those who <i>talk</i> about God's words, and there are those who <i>put them into practice</i>. There are those who talk about God, Jesus, and the Spirit and their essence, and there are those who <i>revere</i> their essence because they bow down and love them with all of their heart, soul, mind, and strength. In other words, people who do not fear God may love to talk about and talk around His words or discuss theology, but they do not like to <i>submit</i> to His Words. People who do not like to change or submit to God generally do not like me because that is all I do and all I talk about. Just because a person sits in church, that does not mean that they have repented from being their own god of their life and are bowing down to Jesus Christ. <i>Many</i> have become the boss of the temple of God (their own body); see 2 Cor 3:16. They have learned religion, but they have not learned that religion should have led them to the cross - to die to self and live for God<sup>5</sup> (Rom 6). Those who claim to teach the Word should teach themselves first and walk like Jesus - not like Eve, who challenged this. In other words, they should give up their food, their pornography, their pride, their gossip, their slander, their love of money, etc. (See Gal 5:19-21, Eph 5:5)</p> <p>Therefore, if you revere the Word of God, His Son, and His Spirit - you <i>obey</i>. "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word." (Isaiah 66:2)<sup>6</sup></p> <p>Walking in fear that I have no right to rebel against God, Jesus, or the Spirit is what I teach. Isaiah 11:3 says that Jesus "delighted in the fear of the Lord." I fearfully</p>	<p>2. One must expect that if one's ministry has become public and so widespread, one must expect godly people will in fact evaluate it. Negative statements are required when critiquing wrong doctrine. This is serious business—the identity of God in the flesh is at stake.</p> <p>3. This is the first tip-off—it is actually quite a simple question—those with the normal understanding of the trinity would have no problem with the question. Clearly, the historical understanding of the concept is in mind. This is such a basic concept to Biblical Christianity, that I am completely baffled why there would be an argument, unless of course Mrs. Shamblin does not believe the Trinity is a scriptural concept.</p> <p>4. No one would define the term “trinity” to be this narrow. Mrs. Shamblin, apparently does not believe in the Trinity-otherwise, she would simply state it up front. It is dangerous to play around with the normal meaning of words. Christians do not believe in many gods, there is only one God who exists in three persons.</p> <p>5. Scripture tells us to live for Christ. “For to me, to live [ is ] Christ , and to die [ is ] gain.” Phil 1:21</p> <p>6. This is all besides the point. Is Mrs. Shamblin trying to imply that if we “don't like her”, then we are those who just talk, and don't walk, and have not bowed down to the Lord Jesus Christ, God in the flesh? Is agreement with her view of things the ultimate proof of Christlikeness? I think we all agree that those who simply talk the talk will not like any efforts to true godliness. What is the point of her argument here? Unless</p>

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<p>and lovingly laying down my will and say "yes!" to what God wants. In fact, this is the defining teaching and fruit of Weigh Down and my writings, and it is evidenced by my life, my marriage<sup>7</sup> my children, and the thousands of testimonials that come in daily. My peace rolls like a river because I have obeyed the commands of God (Ps 119) and have taught others to do so as well.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Satan has lost much ground because through Weigh Down, many thousands are not listening to Satan's voice or the voice of the brownies or pornography calling their name - but are now daily in tune to <i>God's</i> leading. I have spent my entire life searching through His Word, trying to find ways to bow down to Him and to please Him.<sup>9</sup>) When I come upon a temptation or a test from God, I look up to heaven and I reassure Him that He is the recognized creator and boss of my life. I do not have a right to take more than what He has given me. In other words, if He is testing me to see who is the Boss, who is the Lord, who is the CEO, who is the King in our relationship, there is no test any more.<sup>10</sup> God -- have it Your way. Jesus -- have Your way. Spirit of God and Spirit of Christ -- have Your way. In the garden, Eve was tricked into believing that she would be more like God if she rebelled, that her eyes would be opened, and that she would not surely die (Genesis 3) - so she made the decision to be her own boss and eat the forbidden fruit. Her eyes were opened, all right...and she saw clearly that she did not wear the pants in this relationship! In fact, she saw that she had no pants on at all, and found herself naked and laid bare before God. If someone who is opposed to my message and teaching is adamant about discussing words and yet is still being their <i>own</i> boss with regard to food, sexual lust, pride, etc., why do they care <i>what</i> the picture of God is if they are not going to bow down to Him? <i>This</i> will be the true test on Judgement Day. I walk in holy fear of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and with that in mind, I approach this subject with the same reverence and seriousness.<sup>11</sup></p> <p><b>CREDENTIALS</b></p> <p>As we start, let's address my credentials that have been questioned. Servants of God have always been questioned, and even Jesus Himself was questioned: "What authority do you have?" "You do these miracles by Beelzebub," etc. Paul had to defend his ministry that God had given him. Unfortunately, this has to be done from time to time, because people are not aware of the very words of Jesus that say, "A bad tree cannot bear good fruit." If I were a bad tree, you would not be hearing from the thousands who have given themselves over to total Lordship to God Almighty through Jesus Christ and proven it by turning away from any stronghold through my teachings and God's Word.<sup>12</sup> The continual defining summaries I hear after someone attends a seminar are: "I have been in church all my life, but I have never heard this before, or in this light," "this is a revolutionary teaching and it has changed my entire life," "the permanent weight loss is just icing on the cake - the best thing is this new relationship with God. I had no idea He could be that personal!" Even pastors and physicians are saying that they have not seen a clinic,</p>	<p>she is applying it simply to those who differ with her?</p> <p>7. Most godly teachers of the Word would not be so bold as to make this kind of claim publicly. Humility becomes the truth. I would hope my obedience is evident by fruit in my life, but I am not the final judge of that.</p> <p>8. Have you, Mrs. Shamblin) really obeyed all the commands of God. Perfectly? What is the standard? Something is wrong here! Also, many Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses, devout Muslims and Hindus could claim their lives prove the veracity of their teachings!</p> <p>9. Has there never been a time when Mrs. Shamblin has faltered like Peter, King David, etc. I John 1:8 "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."</p> <p>10. Is Mrs. Shamblin teaching the false doctrine that is it possible to arrive a perfect sanctification this side of death?</p> <p>11. But, not all people who oppose Mrs. Shamblin's views are "their own boss". This whole line of "arguing" seems like a manipulation of emotions. One gets the impression that all who disagree are arguing over "words". Satan's most clever deception is to twist the words of God (see the temptation in Matthew where the devil even quoted scriptures – Matthew 4.) Words do have meaning! In fact, it allows Mrs. Shamblin to say she believes in the Trinity (according to her definition), when she doesn't believe in it the way it is normally understood. (We have seen in recent times the obvious deception of this in recent political inquiries). Most false teaching begins with a subtle redefining of words. One illustration of this is as follows: The scripture teaches that a person is saved by grace, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-not by works so that no one should boast. ...Eph 2:8-9. One major religion re-defines grace as something you work for, something you earn by lighting candles, or saying a prescribed number of prayers. Yet, the word means "gift", that which is freely given, not earned. One simple redefinition changes the whole basis for a person's salvation.</p> <p>12. This is quite a claim! "Total" Lordship? Have these thousands turned away from "any" stronghold? Really? How many of these people would be following Mrs. Shamblin's teachings if they knew clearly her views of the trinity?</p>

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<p>church, hospital, or program that has positively affected more lives, and they encourage me to go forward. Many have reported that their churches have had revival as a result of bringing Weigh Down into the church. We have truckloads of testimonies that are still coming in daily. Many people have come to the Lord through The Weigh Down Workshop, and the rest agree they needed to repent or they did not have a proper relationship with God before Weigh Down but have since repented and committed themselves more fully. Therefore, in light of the recent attack on this ministry, it is time for me to stand up.<sup>13</sup> And it is time for the people in Weigh Down to stand up and defend God's truth and His servants against people jumping to the wrong conclusions simply because I have expressed my concerns against some of the confusing teachings of the Trinity. I can promise you that hardly anyone calling in about this has voiced a common understanding with one another regarding the teachings of the Trinity - in other words, the people confronting us are disagreeing with one another! Some believe that the Trinity teaches that God and Jesus are the same being, so that when you get to heaven, you will only see one being, not both Jesus and God, while some other Trinitarians are teaching that there are separate beings.<sup>14</sup> So let's be careful about jumping to conclusions that someone discussing the Trinity is heretical or is not a Christian. The Bible is far too clear on what "<i>heresy</i>" is. Heresy is someone who does not believe that Jesus is the Son of God. I <b>fully</b> believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.<sup>15</sup> I do not believe that He will change into the Father, but He will remain the Son and be seated on the Father's right-hand side when we get to heaven. (Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1). Luke 22:69-71 says, "'But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.' They all asked, 'Are you then the Son of God?' He replied, 'You are right in saying I am.' Then they said, 'Why do we need any more testimony? We have heard it from his own lips.'"<sup>16</sup></p> <p><b>REASONS WHY VERY FEW HAVE QUESTIONED THE MAN-MADE TRINITY TEACHING</b></p> <p>People who have questioned Trinity teachings in the past and present have sometimes been accused of being cult leaders by people whose faulty reasoning is that "cult leaders are people who explain mysteries that our finite minds cannot understand." This is ridiculous.<sup>17</sup> Explaining or revealing mysteries by the help of God is not the definition of a cult leader - otherwise, Daniel or Solomon or the Apostle Paul would be accused of leading cults because they explained mysteries of God and Jesus Christ. Daniel 2:47 states, "The king said to Daniel, 'Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.'" If these "cult experts" use this definition and they also say that my understanding of God, Son and Spirit is wrong - then <i>they</i> must claim to understand enough to know that I am wrong, so therefore by their <b>own</b> definition, <i>they</i> are the cult leader.<sup>18</sup> If these accusers do not understand a mystery, they need to say so. I believe that I do understand the words of God on</p>	<p>13. Success does not mean a person teaches right doctrine. Good fruit can be imitated. Is Mrs. Shamblin prepared to say that the only people who have fruitful, Christ-like lives are followers of her peculiar view of Christ. Does she deny the fruitfulness or Christ-likeness of people who believe that Christ is fully God (Jehovah)! How fruitful would her ministry be if people had known all along about her views of the trinity? Seems many evangelicals would have avoided her material altogether.</p> <p>Despite what she would have us to infer, there are many, many Christians who do live godly, fruitful lives that disagree with her. In addition, many false teachers have produced temporary results. And God at times is gracious in blessing His Word, even at times when the teacher of His Word holds doctrinal error or preach with the wrong motive (see Philippians 1:15-18). Yes, fruit is "an" evidence, but it is not the only evidence! Satan himself can pose as an angel of light. 2 Cor 11:14</p> <p>14. Disagreement among those who differ with her does not mean Trinitarian views are wrong! This is faulty logic.</p> <p>15. But, do you believe that Jesus is the same God as Jehovah?! Or is He some lesser god?! Heresy is someone who does not believe that Jesus is God! Mrs. Shamblin "fully believe(s) that Jesus is the Son of God", but she does not believe that Jesus, the Son is fully God"!</p> <p>16. This last part is true. Jesus remains the Son, because He was and is eternally the Son.</p> <p>17. This is a very narrow definition of a "cult" leader. The problem with a cult is that a human being becomes the source of authority or claims to have the unique and authoritative interpretation of scripture, particularly in the area of who Jesus Christ really is.</p> <p>18. This logic doesn't follow. If I claim to understand all "mysteries", then I must be as intelligent as God Himself! Of course, no one can understand God fully. By definition of our own finitude, we will always fall short of understanding God fully. Therefore, there will be mysteries about God.</p>

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<p>this subject matter.<sup>19</sup> From what we have seen in the e-mails and calls coming to our office, it seems that the Trinity tradition can <i>create</i> mysteries and misunderstandings about God and Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Others are calling me a cult because Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus is the Son of God and that He is not the Father. In other words, one small portion of their teachings must parallel one small portion of my teaching...but I assure you that there are no other comparisons.<sup>20</sup> This is a dangerous and faulty logic. For example, many church leaders teach "baptism"; Jehovah's Witnesses also teach baptism. Does that make every church leader a cult because a portion of their teaching parallels Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons? The fact is that even my teaching on the Trinity does not parallel Jehovah's Witness or Mormons - so please do not continue to falsely accuse me. This is silly - but unfortunately if this has not been thought through, many people can quickly swallow this faulty reasoning and do much damage to God's servants. This is slander in the first degree, and Christians must be careful of people who call themselves "cult experts" but have such a shallow understanding. They must be careful of people who are calling themselves apologetics teachers - watchtowers for the sheep -- and yet are trying to sit down true servants of God who are turning people from their sin. (Read Jeremiah 23.) Not one minister or prophet of God spent his life looking for false prophets...true ministers of God turned people from sin (Jer 23:21-22). The Churches of Christ denomination do not teach members about the Trinity and have removed the word "Trinity" from the song books - but this does not make them a cult.<sup>21</sup></p> <p>A cult leader is clearly someone who leads people to follow the commands of himself or herself, to worship the leader - not God. For instance, Jim Jones was capable of getting his followers to drink poison. In contrast, as a leader, from my first tapes to my last tapes, from my first book to my last book, I have led people to bow down to <i>no other</i> than the One True God of the Universe through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.<sup>22</sup> The people who listen to me have been taught to thoroughly examine everything that I teach alongside of God's Holy Word, to look at the Bible for themselves and as a whole, not taking verses out of context, but rather - putting them into the correct context of Genesis to Revelation. I would never be able to get any of my readers to ever drink poison (nor would I try!) because they would not find scriptures to back that suggestion up. How insulting this must be to those who have gone through Weigh Down to hear such accusations that they are mindless followers in a cult! These Coordinators and participants were taught to run to the Word of God every time they had a temptation to eat when they were not hungry - and this could be up to 20 -30 times a day. From the start, these Christians increased their time in the word by 100%-plus, and they were taught correctly to desire the gifts of the Spirit. These people are now full of wisdom, growing in a relationship with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>23</sup> These Coordinators and participants in Weigh Down are some of the most well-versed, devout and active members of the church who are laying their lives down to get the truth of</p>	<p>19. What if what you, Mrs. Shamblin, "believe" is wrong? Are you above all others, and beyond discussing this?</p> <p>20. This point of parallel is precisely where the Jehovah Witnesses (JW) are wrong and is the most serious part of their error! They arrive at this because they try to explain away the profound nature of God in a simplistic, human way! Since they cannot fathom one God who exists in three persons, they reduce Him down, particular in the understanding of Jesus. They conclude that Jesus is a god, but not the God who is identified in the OT as Jehovah. This comparison of Mrs. Shamblin's teachings and JW's teaching is huge! It is the core of and the most extreme of their false teachings.</p> <p>21. This is unfortunate.</p> <p>22. But does Mrs. Shamblin teach them to bow down to Jesus as God, similar to Thomas' profound acknowledgement, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). Jesus own disciples believed He was God!</p> <p>23. God the Son?</p>

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<p>God's Word out. We have thousands of testimonies on file which proclaim how participants have found a deeper relationship in submission to God and Jesus and they are simply trying to share this glorious relationship with others.<sup>24</sup> They have been taught to be in-tune with and to obey only God Almighty and Jesus Christ, their Lord and Savior, through the promptings of God's Holy Spirit and His Holy Word. These current rash false accusations (Weigh Downers are cult followers) insult millions of people who have participated in Weigh Down and Strongholds classes. This is so disheartening to God and His purposes to these precious people.<sup>25</sup></p> <p>The words that I teach are supported by scripture, and people who have listened to these words and put them into practice have experienced a form of religion but <i>not</i> denying God's power (2 Timothy 3:5). Please read how people knew Jesus' teachings were from God when they put them into practice in John 7:16-18. People today are experiencing freedom from the power of sin and are reaping the benefits of repentance and simply wanting more truth and encouragement to stay on that path. People have lost from 1 to 300 pounds and/or have laid down drugs, antidepressants, cigarettes, pornography, anti-authority, pride, phobias, self-focus, adultery, homosexuality, gambling, anorexia, bulimia, love of money, and many other compulsive behaviors. They have done this by understanding the true picture of Jesus Christ - that He "would not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but humbled Himself to death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2)<sup>26</sup> We have been asked to pick up our cross daily and follow <i>this</i> Jesus, and we are asked to be <i>Christ</i>-like. My experience has been that some of the Trinity teachings confuse some people on how we are to live like Jesus if Jesus and God are the same being.<sup>27</sup> The Bible teaches us that the Son doesn't even know the day or the hour, but only the Father. "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mark 13:32). How could the same "being" keep a secret from part of the Godhead if indeed there is one Head and not two separate beings?<sup>28</sup> Because of the questions that these scriptures raise, I feel that it is proper for Christians to examine human traditions. We live in America, in which we have freedom of religious thought. It has been over 300 years since the Salem witch-hunts. Therefore, I urge people to be careful of accusing someone of heresy because they believe that Jesus is the Son of God and has hundreds of scripture references to back up that reasonable belief.</p> <p>One more last point on credentials: The world's top theologians, linguists, and Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek scholars were all on the committees that translated the original language and original manuscripts into the New International Version of the Bible -- the version from which I teach in the Weigh Down seminars. I say this to help you to be confident in the Greek translation of every word that is in the New International Version.<sup>29</sup> For example, if the Greek scholars translated the words "Jesus is the firstborn over all creation," you can count on the Greek meaning being "born first" or "firstborn." If someone tells you that they know Greek better than the</p>	<p>24. Praise God, if that is true. But, that doesn't validate Mrs. Shamblin's teaching on the person of Christ. Satan has down through the years couched lies among the truth. In fact, the most insidious of lies are those most close to the truth.</p> <p>25. If there is a fundamental disagreement as to whether Jesus is fully God or not--this overrides everything!</p> <p>26. Does this mean that people who study and use the weigh-down principles must have the same view of Christ as Mrs. Shamblin to live this kind of life of freedom? She is mixing some true things in here, but it does not take away the fact that her view of Christ is a great dishonor to Christ himself. If the scriptures teach that Christ is fully God, then Ms. Shamblin's teaching is a great dishonor to Christ! Therefore, it does not honor God. "...all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father . He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him." (John 5:23)</p> <p>27. Experience is not authoritative. If there is confusion, it does not mean the doctrine is wrong—truth, at times, is difficult to understand. If as Mrs. Shamblin says earlier that a child can understand these things about God, then child don't need adults to teach them—simply let them read it for themselves. But, of course, God has given us teachers of the word to help us understand those things which are not easy to understand.</p> <p>28. As for the Father keeping a "secret" from the son, this is understood best in light of Philippians 2:6-7 where Christ "who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness." Clearly, Christ was/is God by nature, and He took on a human nature, limiting himself. Certainly, the God of all creation can limit himself if He so desires. Certainly, He who is eternal and timeless can intersect our limited time/space arena). God took on the form of mankind and certain limitations that go along with that, except for sinfulness (Heb 4:15, 2 Cor 5:21). As a human, Christ choose not to know certain things, because of the role He took on. This is not so hard to accept, in view that He is God and can so do if He desires. God as the Father knew the day and hour, but God as Son, being the Word made flesh, chose not to know. Remember, the truth of God is not limited by our finite minds. It makes sense that there would be some things about God that would be difficult for us to understand. Is it so difficult then to believe that in becoming human, God would also accept this limitation in human understanding—namely, knowing when the day or hour is to be?)</p> <p>29. Why earlier do you (Mrs. Shamblin) challenge the "man-made teaching of the Trinitarian Creeds that were formed over 300 years"—that is a truth hammered out much earlier than 300 years ago in the great debates of Church history. Yet, when it is to your advantage, you appeal to the "top" experts! I am confident that the NIV is a good, usable translation. But my point is you can't claim a view is "man-made" simply because you disagree with it, but then claim another is "authoritative" because it serves your purposes.</p>

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<p>hundreds of top Greek scholars who translated the NIV and who came from every denomination, then I would consider that slightly arrogant. Keep in mind that many denominations were represented on purpose so that there would not be any denominational bias, but only the true meaning translated from the inspired writings found in scriptures.<sup>30</sup></p>	<p>30. The term “Firstborn” is, indeed, an accurate translation and is used of Jesus in a number passages:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Rom 8:29 “...that he (the Son) might be the firstborn among many brothers”</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Col 1:15 “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Colossians 1:18-19 “...he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. God was please to have all his fullness dwell in him”.</p> <p>The term firstborn cannot mean He was first born literally, because Mary his mother along with many people were obviously physically born before He was. It cannot refer to Christ being the “Spiritual” firstborn of God, because the scripture calls him “God’s one and only Son” John 3:18 (NIV), or “only begotten Son” (NKJV). It is true, that through faith, we become “children of God” (John 1:12), but we are not “begotten” children, we are adopted (Romans 8:15).</p> <p>John 1:1 &amp; 14 show that the Word (i.e. Jesus, the Son of God) existed before He was “born” into this human world: “In the beginning was the word and the Word was with God and the Word was God...and the word became flesh.” The “experts” (as Mrs. Shamblin refers to them) clearly did not use the word “first created” but used “firstborn” So what does the term “first born” then mean? Mrs. Shamblin doesn’t indicate what she thinks it means, but my observation is that most people who make an issue of this word usually interpret it to mean Jesus was “first created.” The only way this word comes into the conversation is if one person sees it this way. Why else would Mrs. Shamblin bring this up as an example?</p> <p>The word is used in other contexts as well. Normally, the term “firstborn,” in its basic connotation means the first one born into a family, the eldest son (this was never used of a daughter). In the Old Testament, the first born occupied the position of privilege. He received the family blessing. Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau was literally the firstborn, Jacob’s elder brother (Genesis 25:23-25). Jacob understood this and pretended to be Esau in order to gain the blessing of the firstborn when he disguised himself before his blind father, Isaac, and said, “I am Esau your firstborn” (Genesis 27:19). Despite the deception, God honored the transfer of the blessing of the firstborn to Jacob. The point here is that now the rights of the firstborn no longer resided with the one physically born first.</p> <p>Through Israel’s history the term “first born” came to refer to the rights of blessing and inheritance. God’s prophecy (Genesis 25:23) was that the older would serve the younger. God, then, fulfilled his promises to Abraham through the line of Isaac and then Jacob (the younger of the two brothers). Not through Esau’s line.</p> <p>Joseph (one of Jacob’s sons) gave the blessing of the firstborn to the younger of the two sons Ephraim rather than the older Manasseh Genesis 48:18). Jeremiah refers to Ephraim as God’s “firstborn son.” Referring to the northern kingdom of Israel (after</p>

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<p>You are correct in saying that I did not go to some of the present-day theological schools. However, I would be concerned if <i>anyone</i> ever believed that they could hand money over to an institution and purchase the Holy Spirit of God! The only reference to someone who tried to buy the Holy Spirit in the New Testament was Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8), and he was completely reprimanded as a sinner.</p> <p>Since I was a little girl, I have prayed for the wisdom of Solomon and the heart of David, because he was the apple of God's eye. I have desired to have the gifts of wisdom, of knowledge, and of understanding so that I could help God gain more</p>	<p>the time of the divided kingdom). God refers to David in similar manner: "I will appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth (Psalm 89:27). David was the last of eight brothers, not the first. Clearly, "firstborn" here means one possessing a privileged position.</p> <p>In Exodus 4:22, God declares that "Israel is my firstborn." The term Israel here refers to the descendants of Jacob, who was literally the "second born." Israel was not the first nation on the earth. Clearly, the term doesn't mean the literal first in existence, but indicates one who has special standing with God. The obvious understanding here is that the nation of Israel (as opposed to all the nations on the earth) occupied a special relationship with God, and the term "firstborn" describes that relationship—one of privilege and priority in God's plan.</p> <p>Later every "first born" (literally) of Jewish women was to be consecrated to the Lord (Exodus 13:2). This was a privileged position within the nation of God's people. But God modified this responsibility/privilege, when he instructed that the Levites were to substitute for the literal firstborn. "I have taken them as my own in place of the firstborn, the first male offspring from every Israelite woman." Number 8:15 (compare Number 3:41). Levi, from whom the Levites descended, was not the first born of Jacob, but the third (Genesis 29:34). The Levites then assumed the role and privileges of "firstborn." This involved the service of the Lord in relationship to Israel's worship.</p> <p>So, the term "first born" does not necessarily mean "born first", nor does it mean "created first." Though it originally meant the first out of the womb, the term carries the connotation of position of privilege and priority. Clearly, Christ was not the first human being physically born. And He is clearly not a created being, so therefore, could not be the first created. He is the one of privilege and priority. This is exactly the sense of the context of Colossians 1:15-18</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy." (Colossians 1:15-18)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Through him (i.e. the Word made flesh) all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." John 1:3</p> <p>If He created all things, then He himself could not have been created.</p> <p>When the scripture says Christ is the "firstborn," it means He is in a position of privilege and priority—supreme over all creation and head over all the church! It does not mean He is a created being.</p>

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<p>kingdom territory down on earth...in other words, turn more hearts back to Him. As it turns out, scripture backs up this method of gaining wisdom and insight, and I don't believe that God gives to those who have the wrong motive.<sup>31</sup> My motive was <i>not</i> to be a leader of men. My highest goal was to be a registered dietitian in the bottom of a hospital with a hairnet on, but God had different plans for me. First Corinthians 12 says to "earnestly desire" the gifts, and the first chapter of James says "you must have faith" when you ask for wisdom. None of Jesus' disciples were schooled individuals, yet the Bible tells us that they spoke boldly, and the Pharisees (the preachers of the day who had been to school) took note that the disciples had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). In other words, anyone who is following Christ in dying to himself, living only for God, taking up their cross daily, and making their food to do the will of the Father are truly baptized disciples who have been granted the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>32</sup> Acts 5:32 says, "We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him." These disciples were bold not because they had been to school and not because they had "talked the talk," but they had walked the walk and therefore they were full of the Holy Spirit and power. In fact, it took a road to Damascus experience for Paul to lay down his former schooling and turn to Christ. Paul said, "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power" (1 Cor. 2:4-5). God has blessed my words so that people who have been in bondage or prison to many addictions for decades have been able to walk free. Please interview and listen to <i>them</i>, not to ex-employees who are disgruntled!<sup>33</sup></p> <p>I am not putting down the pure-hearted desires of those who have worked hard, who have gone to school with a pure heart, to study the Bible for the sake of God; I am only asking you <i>not</i> to put someone down who has received gifts according to how the Bible teaches that you receive gifts of wisdom and the Holy Spirit. I believe that this understanding that God has given me of Himself, His Son, and His Spirit will make total sense and clear up many confusing passages, and I believe that non-schooled Christians can have the gifts on their own to understand the Word of God without always having to run to someone else. I believe that a wise person will get the advice of those full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, but we must prayerfully approach the Word of God, praying and believing that He will give us wisdom. You do not earn it or pay for it. Please read on.</p> <p><b>DICTIONARY DEFINITION OF THE TRINITY DOCTRINE</b></p> <p>Look clearly at the definition of the Trinity from the dictionary: "Are there more Gods than one? There is but one only, the living and true God. How many persons are there in the Godhead? There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal</p>	<p>31. What about Solomon, who prayed for wisdom and received it generously from God, yet did many foolish things like marrying many pagan wives and worshipping idols? (1 Kings 11:1-13)</p> <p>32. Is Mrs. Shamblin saying that one must be a fully mature disciple before one receives the gift of the Holy Spirit? The Corinthians were very carnal, yet Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:13:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”</p> <p>Clearly, the “we” includes his 1<sup>st</sup> century audience, the carnal Corinthians. In talking about the Holy Spirit, Paul does not make a distinction between the one who is “dying to himself” and the one who is carnal. All believers have the Holy Spirit. Is Mrs. Shamblin trying to say that she has been granted the Holy Spirit, but her accusers have not?</p> <p>33. We will try to take ALL things into consideration, both pros and cons. This should include the detractors as well as the supporters.</p> <p>34. Which dictionary?</p>

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<p>in power and glory."<sup>34</sup></p> <p>There is no reference in the Bible to the word "Trinity," and the only reason that I tell you this is simply because many people are not aware that this is not a Biblical term. The point, in and of itself, is not what I use to argue its invalidity. The Trinity tradition is based on human teachings which were formed between 325 and 415 AD. These man-made teachings have been debated since its inception. I should not be looked down upon because I continue the debate. Paul warns us in Colossians, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy which depends on human tradition..." (2:8). Why would anyone be threatened by examining a human tradition, even if it is generally accepted? I would be more concerned with someone who questioned the inspiration of the Holy Scripture, and there are many such leaders today who fall into that category and may have had better treatment than I. In other words, the teaching of the Trinity was formed hundreds of years after the time of Christ; yet the Old Testament and the New Testament are thousands of years old and are inspired... this is what God wants taught. Let's break down this definition into several questions and tackle one tradition at a time.<sup>35</sup></p> <p>ACCORDING TO THE TRINITY, JESUS AND GOD ARE THE SAME BEING. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?<sup>36</sup></p> <p>IS JESUS GOD?</p> <p>The answer: I believe that Jesus and God are two separate beings. I believe that Jesus is our Lord (referenced hundreds of times) and our God (referenced one time, therefore an unusual question), but I believe that the God of Jesus is God the Father. Jesus is not God the Father<sup>37</sup>.</p> <p>There are over 100 references to God as the <i>Father</i>, over 40 references to Jesus as the <i>Son of God</i>, the child that is born (referenced in Isaiah) is referred to as "Prince of Peace, Mighty God" one time, and all citations in the Bible to God's Holy Spirit reference the word "Spirit." Therefore I believe that a child reading the Bible would easily understand what God is trying to get across to us - that God is the Father, Jesus is the Son of God, and God's Holy Spirit is the spirit of God. I almost feel silly saying something that is so completely obvious. God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are one in purpose, and yet, where Jesus' will does not line up with the Father's, through sweatdrops of blood, Jesus submitted and said, "Not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42), indicating there are two separate beings.<sup>38</sup></p> <p>There is one God, and God the King has given His Son, Jesus Christ, all authority over heaven and earth; so if our God says to worship and bow down to His Son as</p>	<p>35. Mrs. Shamblin seems to be prejudicing the reader of this article by constant reference to the trinity being "human tradition" and "man-made teaching." One could just as well lace an article through with the idea that <i>her</i> teaching is "man-made." This is not a fair and open minded approach to the subject, which she claims to be making. She feels she deserves the respect of those who hold the Trinitarian view, yet she continuously disrespects them with pejorative, negative terms.</p> <p>36. I note that this wording does not come from the definition of "trinity" Mrs. Shamblin quoted above. I wonder what the word "being" means to her? I'm not being facetious, but just trying to find out what she is arguing against.</p> <p>37. Agreed, the Son is not the Father, per se'. But, the direction Mrs. Shamblin is going is becoming more clear—she is implying that Jesus is not God!</p> <p>38. No, this indicates two separate "persons". That is not the same as saying two separate beings. It would indeed be a contradiction to say there is one God, yet three gods. And it would, indeed, be a contradiction to say there is one being, yet three beings. Or one person, yet three persons. But, it is not a logical contradiction to say there is one God, yet three persons. Mrs. Shamblin is using the word "being" somewhat ambiguously. Also, what does she make of Thomas' worship of Jesus as, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). Jesus doesn't correct him, but accepts this praise. Clearly, if Jesus were not God, then He should have soundly rebuked Thomas.</p> <p>39. But, in the first commandment God (Jehovah) clearly says</p>

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<p>well as Himself, we had best do it!<sup>39</sup></p> <p>The passages to back up this truth that God gave His Son all this authority are too numerous to reference, but here are just a few: 1Cor 15:27-28, John 17:1-2, Rev 2:26-27, Matt 28:18. God has allowed kings and royalty here on earth, and there is no one who cannot understand that the king's son is royalty, no matter what age. Who in today's world does not understand the position of Prince William? No one has ever argued that he is royalty. Just because God, through His inspired Word, called Jesus His <b>Son</b>, it does not negate Jesus' royalty, deity, position, power, authority - it does not make Him inferior. There are three references in the Bible to a child's name called "Emmanuel," which means "God with us." Jesus is obviously "Prince of Peace, Mighty God" to us (see Isaiah)<sup>40</sup> but God the Father is obviously the God of Jesus. Notice one of many references that says, "Praise be to the <b>God</b> and <b>Father</b> of Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). And what authority Jesus has has been <i>given</i>.<sup>41</sup></p> <p>Again, I reference that not even Jesus knew the hour and the day of the end times (Mark 13:32). Therefore, it had to be a Father <b>and</b> a Son. In John 8:17-18, Jesus' own authority was questioned, and He said, "In your own Law, it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father who sent me." Jesus Himself is telling you once again that there are <b>two</b> separate witnesses here. With so many references listed, why does a man-made teaching want to make the Father and His only Son one being? This is twisted, and we should rethink this man-made tradition.<sup>42</sup></p> <p>IS JESUS A CREATED BEING?</p> <p>The Bible does not use the words - "Jesus is a created being." Therefore, I will not add these words.<sup>43</sup> However, Jesus is described over and over as the Son of God, begotten by God, from God, sent from God, firstborn, etc. Therefore, I believe - Jesus is from God and He is His Son! The Apostle makes it very clear ... "When He (God) has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, <b>so that God may be all in all.</b>" I Cor. 15:28 I believe that God is the Source of all and that the Son "was firstborn over all creation." (Col.1:15) They are one in purpose and all power and glory has been GIVEN to the Son. They are way up there. Creation is way below and it was created by God and Jesus and the Spirit - for Jesus and by Jesus. " For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities: all things were created by him and for him." I Cor 1:16.<sup>44</sup></p> <p>DO YOU BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS EQUAL IN POWER AND GLORY?</p> <p>The answer: No. "The head of Christ is God" (1 Cor 11:3). And yet Jesus has been</p>	<p>"You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them" Exodus 20:3-5.</p> <p>Is God contradicting himself! No, of course not. Because He is telling us to not bow down to anyone else but to the true God, Jehovah. If one rejects the Trinitarian understanding, then one must conclude that God is contradicting himself (which is impossible).</p> <p>40. That's Isaiah 9:6. I would like to ask Mrs. Shamblin why she added the phrase "to us". She is adding to scripture here. Clearly, God says the coming One would "<i>be called</i>" Mighty God. If this coming One was not going to be God (which term in this context is applied to Jehovah, Himself) how could God say he should be <i>called</i> "Mighty God." There is no ambiguity in the Old Testament that there is one God and only one God. The Jewish people as a result were adamantly monotheistic to the core. To believe in two separate Gods (Father and Son), would be completely contrary to all else written in scripture. The hallmark of Jewish belief is found in Deut 6:4</p> <p>"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."</p> <p>To make this clear, God says through Isaiah:</p> <p>"Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one (Isaiah 44:8)</p> <p>"I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting men may know there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other. (Isaiah 45:5-6)</p> <p>"Surely God is with you, and there is no other; there is no other god (Isaiah 45:14) See also, Isaiah 45:18, 22, 46:9, etc</p> <p>41. But, this doesn't prove that Jesus is not God.</p> <p>42. Again, I reference my comments above—this is explained by Philippians 2 where God tells us that Jesus was God (in nature) and took on the nature of a man, with some of the attendant limitations.</p> <p>43. Mrs. Shamblin seems to want to use those words, and seems disappointed they don't occur in the scripture. The first word of the next sentence, "However" is revealing.</p> <p>44. Nothing Mrs. Shamblin has said here specifically states that Jesus was created, but she is implying this conclusion by the way she has laid this out. I believe it is a simple and appropriate question. "Was/is Jesus a created being?" Even by her own argument, that is, Jesus being the Son, she would have to conclude that He is the "eternally begotten" Son, that is, not created, but was always God's Son. As for "firstborn" see my above comments that indicate the terms does not mean "first created." Mrs. Shamblin is using inference that is completely unsupported by the text.</p>

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<p>granted the right hand of God and has been given all authority over heaven and earth, powers, rulers, and authorities, so that He would have supremacy over everything except for God Himself (see 1 Cor 15:27-28).<sup>45</sup></p> <p>Even though God "was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Him" and gave Him authority to forgive sin, and all authority was <b>given</b> to Him, and He was made our Lord and Savior by the Father, no scripture says that Jesus is the Father - but every<sup>46</sup> scripture says that He is the <b>Son</b> of God and the Messiah (Christ).<sup>47</sup> Please read the following scriptures to show that Jesus himself says that God the Father is His God - but no where does it say that Jesus is head of God or has given God anything. (But, saying that Jesus is not the Father, does not mean that Jesus is not God!)</p> <p>"Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman is man, and THE HEAD OF CHRIST IS GOD." 1 Cor 11:3</p> <p>"Jesus said, "I am returning to my Father and your Father, to MY GOD and your God." John 20:17</p> <p>"About the Son, he says... 'You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness, therefore God, YOUR GOD, has set you above your companions.'" Hebrews 1:9</p> <p>"Praise be to THE GOD AND FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ" 1 Peter 1:3</p> <p>These types of scriptures are all over the Bible! How could someone state that Jesus and God are equal.<sup>48</sup> in all things when Jesus Himself refers to God as "<b>His</b> God." God never refers to Jesus as "<b>His</b> God."<sup>49</sup> I am afraid that most people are more familiar with catechisms than they are with <b>Scripture</b>. This is horrifying and dangerous. The scriptures are teaching a scriptural line of authority - not polytheism. God and Jesus both are testifying that there is one ultimate God, and the authority that the Son of God has, was given to Him by the Father. Again, I refer to 1 Corinthians 15:27-28: "For he 'has put everything under his feet.' Now when it says that 'everything' has been put under him, it is clear that this does <b>NOT</b> include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all."<sup>50</sup></p> <p>Jesus states that He can only do what He sees His Father doing, and Revelations is clear that Jesus will be sitting at the right-hand side of God. Now think with me: Why would you not want to question a document made up by man that is claiming that Jesus is equal, when He Himself said that he did not consider equality with God something to be grasped (Phil 2:5-11)?<sup>51</sup> Jesus stated that the Father was "greater than I" (John 14:28), and when someone referred to Jesus as "good</p>	<p>This is deceptive. Why doesn't she come right out and say that she believes Jesus is a created being?</p> <p>45. But, this passage says "the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all." I take it this means the purpose for which the Son has been eternally sent will find its ultimate culmination in the end. The unity of God the Father and God the Son will be manifest completely – "that God may be all in all." I might note that when the Son and the Father are referred to in the New Testament, the terminology is often Jesus/Son and God, where God refers to the Father. But, as has been shown elsewhere, Jesus also is seen in scripture as God, so there is no confusion here. We relate to Jesus' incarnation when He is seen in relationship to his Father as God.</p> <p>46. Not every scripture describes the relationship of Jesus to God as "Son."</p> <p>47. Even the Jews recognized that only God can forgive sin Luke 5:21. They even tried to stone him when He asserted, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Why stone him? Clearly, they understood that He was using the name of God in the Old Testament "I am" for himself (see Exodus 3:14). For further on this, see "Christ's Use of 'I am' in Light of the Divine Name." Master's Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminar, 1983, by Charles R. Gianotti)</p> <p>The Jews understood full well what Jesus was implying, and they acted accordingly—stoning was the penalty for blasphemy. It this was the wrong conclusion, Jesus could have cleared up the misunderstanding easily. It was not that He was claiming to be the "Son of God", but that He was the "I am". In fact, John 5:18 makes clear that Jesus' calling God his father was a clear indication of his being <b>equal</b> to God! "For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God."</p> <p>48. But, John the inspired writer, says they are equal (John 5:18 see above comments)</p> <p>49. Psalm 110:1 "The Lord says to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." In this passage, David records a conversation between "the LORD" (Jehovah) and "my Lord" (Adonai). Most commentators recognize this to be God speaking to the Messiah, that is the Son, and using the same words that are reserved for Himself. This Psalm is one of the most quoted OT references in the NT (Matthew 22:41-43, Mark 12:35-37, Luke 20:41-44, Acts 2:34-35, Heb 1:13, 10:12-13.</p> <p>50. In Mrs. Shamblin's doctrine, there is only one God, but Jesus is not God. However, you can't have your cake and eat it too. You cannot say that Jesus is "deity" (which means He is a god), and also claim you hold to monotheism ("one God")—unless of course you conclude that Jesus is that one God. Side note, she says there is one "ultimate" God. Scripture makes it clear that there is only one God, PERIOD! See verses above (Deut 6:4, Isaiah, etc.)</p> <p>51. The scriptures tell us that Jesus indicated he was "equal" with God (John 5:18 see</p>

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<p>teacher," Jesus said, "No one is good - except God alone" (Luke 18:18).<sup>52</sup></p> <p>This is an easy teaching: you bow down to the Father and His Son, to God and His Son - both being deity<sup>53</sup>, but Jesus clearly under the authority of His Father. When Jesus is at the right hand side of God, why would someone want to endorse a teaching that says that Jesus is "equal in glory"? If they were equal in glory, why does the Bible tell us over and over that we will see Jesus sitting at the <b>right hand side</b> of God? Why doesn't the Bible just say that Jesus and God would be sitting on two co-equal thrones?<sup>54</sup></p> <p>Half of the Trinitarians say that they will bow down to <b>both</b> Jesus and God when they get to heaven, and the other half believes that there will only be <b>one</b> being - but they can never tell me which one will be missing: Jesus or God.</p> <p>DO YOU BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS EQUAL IN SUBSTANCE?</p> <p>The answer: It depends upon what you mean by "substance."</p> <p>This picture of God as one being but transforming himself into three forms like water, ice, and steam, is confusing at best.<sup>55</sup> If you want to argue that Jesus is equal in substance, what are you referring to? That He is deity? But of COURSE He is deity - He is the Son of God, and He has been given all authority over heaven and earth by the Father! Jesus has been given many authoritative responsibilities that are the same as the Father's... for instance, Jesus said in front of the Pharisees, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." He said to the paralytic, 'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.'" (Mk 2:10-11)</p> <p>But if you are arguing that they are like water, ice, and steam, this is not accurate. I do believe that the Spirit of God is a Spirit, and that references to the Spirit of Christ refer to His Spirit. I do not believe that references to the Spirit of Christ mean there is a fourth person. I do not refer to God as a person.<sup>56</sup></p> <p>People who teach the Trinity argue that Jesus and God are one because they are trying to justify the teaching in the Trinity that says, "these three are one God." They also use the one and only passage that I can find that might remotely back up their teaching. John 1:1-2 says "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning." However, this means that Jesus is deity - He is not the Father -- for verse 2 says, "He was <b>with</b> God in the beginning." And then verse 13 says "born of God." Please do not take</p>	<p>above) and also says He was by nature God (Phil 2:5-11) and therefore did not need to grasp after that which was His. He could voluntarily set aside the outward appearance and functioning of deity while He resided in the nature of mankind! That's why I hold to that trinity statement!</p> <p>52. Again, the Father being greater, is a matter of role. For example. A friend of mine is a part owner in a large family owned business. But, he was also an employee who worked as public relations officer under the president of the company. In his role as owner, he was greater than the president, and therefore the president was accountable to him. But in his role as public relations officer, he was lesser than the president, and therefore the line of accountability was reversed, because the roles were reversed.</p> <p>Now, these terms greater and lesser do not refer to a persons essential being. In other words, as a human being, my friend is neither greater or lesser than the president. But, in their roles in the context of the company those terms apply and are useful. In the same way, while the Father and Son are not greater or lesser than one another in their essential being, these terms apply in their roles. The Father is greater in function and role, but the Son is equal with the Father in their essential being.</p> <p>By the way, if a person is uncomfortable referring to God with plural pronouns as in the phrase I just used "their essential being", please refer to Genesis 1:26 "Then God said, 'Let us make man in <i>our</i> image...'" (emphasis added). Using the plural in reference to God does not deny the essential unity of God. As early as the creation account, God refers to himself in the plural. One God, plural!</p> <p>53. Mrs. Shamblin seems quite confused—just a short while ago she said there is one "ultimate" God. There is absolutely no scriptural permission to acknowledge a lesser deity!</p> <p>54. Because in the eternal state, the unity of God is fully affirmed!</p> <p>55. Not really, I think it is pretty good. All attempts to understand God by analogy are limited, but they are helpful)</p> <p>56. Why not? The Bible over and over uses "personal" pronouns to refer to God. Even God himself refers to himself in personal terms! How can you say He is not a person?</p> <p>57. But, she has already acknowledged that there is only one God! She is contradicting herself. Is she trying to say that the term "deity" does not mean "god?" There can be no god besides God! This is affirmed throughout scripture.</p>

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<p>verses out of context.<sup>57</sup></p> <p>Teachers of the Trinity teach that Jesus is Jehovah; they have no scriptures to back this up, and why don't they believe that Jesus is the <i>Son</i> of God and that Jehovah is Jehovah?<sup>58</sup></p> <p>The Bible teaches us that Jesus is the firstborn over all creation (Colossians 1:15). This is the authority line: God - then Jesus the firstborn - then God through the Son made all of creation. The Bible teaches us that the Son would reconcile all of creation back to the Father through the blood of Christ.<sup>59</sup></p> <p><i>"He is the image of the invisible God, the FIRSTBORN over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or power or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together...For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross."</i> (Colossians 1:15-20)</p> <p>This is so easy and clear - unless you want to twist it. Someone might claim to you and boast to you that they are a better Greek scholar than all the hundreds of the prestigious Greek scholars of our day who accurately translated the Greek word into the English word, "firstborn," in the New International Version. These people may boast that they know better, but please be careful of people who add to or take away from the Bible. Think again with me - God was, then the Son (firstborn), and then together they made the heavens and the earth and God gave Jesus the authority that he has. That is why Genesis 1: 26 says, <i>"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air' "</i> Jesus was there in the beginning of creation with God. We know what a son is - why do we want to make Jesus the Father and not the Son - I will never know. Jesus never taught anything that wasn't from the Father.<sup>60</sup></p> <p>I have talked to several defenders of the Trinity recently, and they cannot answer this one question clearly for me: "When you get to heaven, will you bow down to Jesus?" They always answer "yes," but they get nervous because they see where I am going. Then I ask, "Will you be bowing down to God, too?" And they do not answer, because they then go on to say that Jesus and God are one. I then ask them, "Who will be missing - Jesus or God?" And they cannot answer.<sup>61</sup> I pray that people will let go of man-made rules and hold on to the teachings of Jesus and of God through the inspired Word of God, which teaches you that there is God, and His Spirit, and Jesus, His Son at His right hand, and that every knee will bow to both Jesus and God.<sup>62</sup></p>	<p>58. See above discussion on John 8:58. Also, consider Romans 10:9-10—we are told here by inspiration that we must confess “Jesus as Lord.” What does this mean? The word “Lord” in this context refers precisely to Jehovah! The closest use of the word “Lord” in the immediate context is found in 10:13 “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”). This is a quote from Joel 2:32 “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.” In Joel, the term is in all capitals. That is the translator’s way of rendering the Hebrew word that is popularly pronounced “Jehovah”, and is the personal name of God Himself (See Exodus 3:14-15 and Exodus 6:2-3).</p> <p>Since the Jews were somewhat superstitious about the name of God, they would not speak it with their mouths. It was not carried into the Greek language because the pronunciation of it was lost. Hebrew was originally written in consonants only, the vowels were passed down orally. But, since the name of God was not spoken, the vowels were lost. When later Hebrew scribes added the vowels, they added the vowels for Adonai to the consonants for God’s name. That is why there is some debate on whether it is pronounced and spelled Jehovah or Jahveh (or phonetically “Yahweh”).</p> <p>When New Testament writers quoted from the Old Testament scriptures, they routinely used the Greek version of the Old Testament (called “The Septuagint” or the LXX). The divine Name <i>Jehovah</i> was rendered “kurios” in Greek. The English translators normally used the term “Lord” to render “kurios”. The passage quoted in Romans 10:13 clearly refers to Jehovah. And therefore, when it says, “Confess with you mouth Jesus is Lord,” it is saying very explicitly that to be saved a person must confess Jesus is God (that is, Jehovah, the one ultimate God!) Any Jewish person would readily see this connection, and Paul, being so steeped in Hebrew and Greek scriptures, would have known exactly what he was doing when he quoted Joel. This was all inspired by God)</p> <p>59. In order to do this, Christ would have to have been the perfect sacrifice. If there is only one God, and Jesus were not that one true God, then Jesus could not have been perfect, because only God is perfect.</p> <p>60. Concerning the scripture Mrs. Shamblin just quoted that says, “God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him...” (Colossians 1:15-20)—assuming that “God” here refers to Jehovah, precisely what part or aspect of Jehovah does not dwell in Jesus the Son? If there is anything lacking in deity, then how can God say, “all his fullness” dwelt in Jesus? Clearly, this is one of the most powerful statements in scripture supporting that Jesus is fully God, Jehovah!</p> <p>61. Revelation 4:8 tells us that the four living creatures praised the one on the throne,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.” (Rev. 4:8)</p> <p>Clearly, this being on the throne is Deity in the fullest sense, “Lord God Almighty.” Therefore, according to Mrs. Shamblin’s perspective this must be Jehovah, or to put it</p>

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<p>Here are some other questions that stump people teaching the Trinity: "When the Heavens opened at the baptism of Jesus, did God say that He was pleased with Himself?" "When Jesus died on the cross and said it was finished, did God turn away from Himself?" No - "Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' - which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" A third question to ask them is, "Did the Heavens open and Stephen REALLY see Jesus at the right hand side of God?" We cannot argue that Jesus was only submissive when He was on earth - for Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).<sup>63</sup></p> <p>IN CONCLUSION</p> <p>The reason that all of this important is that if you do not understand that God is the clear authority and that Jesus was under God's authority, then you will not have a clear picture what it means to be Christ like. Jesus suffered, obeyed, submitted,</p>	<p>another way, God the Father. In fact, the 24 elders in verse of the same chapter</p> <p>“... fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever.. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things ...” (Rev 4:10)</p> <p>Then in the very next chapter, John records:</p> <p>“Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.” (Rev 5:6)</p> <p>Then:</p> <p>“...the four living creatures and the 24 elders <i>fell down</i> before the Lamb” (emphasis added). (Rev 5:8)</p> <p>No one would doubt that the lamb here is Jesus, the Son of God. Verse 11 adds in,</p> <p>“The I looked and heard the voice of many angels numbering thousands upon thousand, and ten thousand times ten thousands. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they say: ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’” (Rev 5:11)</p> <p>This is very similar to how the 24 elders and the four creatures praised the Lord God Almighty in Revelation 4:11. Chapter five finishes with: “to him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, be praise and honor and glory and power for ever and ever! The four living creatures said, ‘Amen,’ and the elders fell down and worshiped.”</p> <p>Clearly, both the Lord God Almighty and the lamb are worshipped equally!</p> <p>62. It is also instructive to note that Revelation 4 has the Lord God Almighty on the throne. Then Revelation 5:6 has the Lamb (Jesus) standing in the center of the throne. There is clearly an identification happening here. It makes a strong case for seeing Jesus as God (the Lord Almighty). In other words, the Lord God Almighty of chapter 4 and the Lamb (Jesus, God the Son) of chapter 5 are equally worshipped, occupy the same throne. This argues in favor that both the Father and the Son are equally God. Yet, the distinction remains at the end of chapter 5 (verse 13) “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb...”</p> <p>63. I think all these concerns are adequately answered in a correct understanding of the trinity. If a person accepts that there is one God who exists as three distinct persons, then the answer to these questions is straightforward: Jesus, the Son, as the incarnate God/man is communicating with the God the Father. One essential being, but acting in two different roles.</p> <p>Keep in mind that an infinite God has come to earth and taken on human nature. This, by itself, injects a dimension that challenges the mind to the utmost. Of course, Mrs. Shamblin would deny that the Lord God Almighty became flesh. Yet, John 1:1 and 14</p>

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<p>denied His will, and made it His food to do the will of the Father. In John 14:28, Jesus Himself says, "...If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is GREATER than I." The disciples referenced Jesus as the "Christ - the Son of the living God" when He asked, "Who do you say that I am?" (See Matt. 16:16) Please tell me why someone would want to insist that Jesus and the Father are the same exact being when God Himself says that Jesus is His Son, and Jesus Himself states that the Father is greater, and the whole New Testament demonstrates how Jesus was under God's authority, submitting His will to the Father's, even to the point of death? The Bible clearly teaches that when Jesus' will did not match God's, Jesus submitted by saying, "Not my will but yours be done." The Luke version of this story says that Jesus knelt down and prayed to God, saying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me. Yet not my will but yours be done." (Luke 22:42) Again, Mark's version says, "Going a little farther, He fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. 'Abba, Father,' He said, 'everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.'" (Mark 14:35-36) And at his death, Jesus said, "Into your hands, I commit my Spirit." Isaiah 53:10 says, "Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer." God did not send Himself to death, but rather His Son. This gives us a very clear picture of embracing the cross of Christ. First Peter 1:24 says "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that <i>we might die</i> to sins and live for righteousness..." When Jesus prayed in the garden, He was not dialoging with Himself as if He were schizophrenic,<sup>64</sup> but rather, He was dialoging with His Father. I know, like Stephen, that we will one day see the heavens open and see God and <i>also</i> see Jesus seated at His right hand; we will not see just one being. Several will argue that what Stephen saw was symbolic, but my question to them is "symbolic of what?" The only answer to this is that it is symbolic that Jesus is ruling with God, at His right hand. That is so easy to understand! Others will argue that God and Jesus are just spirits, and therefore, once again, it was symbolic to argue that Jesus and God are one. But God tells us that we are made in His image and in the image of Christ. An image is a image. I believe in the Word of God, and I believe that He gave us that image for a reason. People who hold rigidly to the man-made Trinitarian doctrine say that the picture of God and Jesus and the Spirit is a <i>mystery</i><sup>65</sup> that one is three and three is one, but there are no scripture references to back that up in the NIV. I believe that God sent His Word to us through the Biblical writings and through Christ on earth to show us what He is like.</p> <p>So again, no matter how you see or picture God the Father, Jesus His Son, and the Holy Spirit, the essential thing is to bow down in reverent submission to each. My love, Gwen</p> <p>©Copyright 2000 by Gwen Shamblin and The Weigh Down Workshop, Inc.</p>	<p>makes this very clear (not withstanding the standard Jehovah Witnesses forced and faulty interpretation of these verses).</p> <p>So then, if God has indeed become flesh, it makes sense that the scriptural description of how this all works out will strain the limits of our finite understanding. It is certainly within the realm of God's ability to do such a thing as become human, and to intersect time and space as we know it. But, our understanding of time and space is limited—and so is our understanding of an infinite God. Yet, in becoming human and limiting himself, God cannot at the same time deny Himself and His essential immutable attributes.</p> <p>Therefore, in becoming a man, He still remained the Sovereign of the universe in whom "all things hold together" (Col 1:17). The Trinitarian understanding simply acknowledges the reality of this situation, which seems a dilemma to the human mind, but is a very natural thing to an infinite God who became flesh.</p> <p>64. This is a completely false caricaturization of the trinity teaching—no one who knows the Word well would believe that Jesus was schizophrenic and praying to himself. This is adequately answered above by holding to the Trinitarian view.)</p> <p>65. But, Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit says:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">I Timothy 3:16 says, "Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory."</p> <p>Yes, it is a mystery that God appeared in human form. The scripture is clear about this. Why does Mrs. Shamblin deliberately leave this verse out. There are many mysteries in the scripture, such things keep us studying the scriptures to plumb the depths of Christ and our knowledge of Him.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"But grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." ( 2 Peter 3:18)</p> <p>No thinking "Trinitarian" would say that one equals three. Just to clarify once again, the Trinitarian view says there is one God who exists in three persons. This is not the same as saying "one is three". One God equals three persons, One God does not equal three Gods, and One person does not equal three persons.</p>

## FINAL ANALYSIS

Summary of above analysis:

- 1) Mrs. Shamblin's writings are filled with pejorative comments against those who disagree with her view point. Yet, her perspective has been rightly understood through the centuries as an heretical doctrine. At best, she is greatly confused and has an inability to think through these issues clearly, notwithstanding her constant claim to being "easy to understand." At worst, she has been purposely deceptive in her teaching, hiding her false beliefs about Christ.
- 2) On the one hand she claims that scripture teaches against polytheism (many gods), but claims that Jesus is deity, though not the same as God Almighty. She seems to want to use the term "deity" to mean something other than god. The term as most people understand it does not mean godliness, or godlike. It refers to a being as a "god." If Jesus is deity (a god) and He is not God Almighty, then there is more than one God (which clearly contradicts scripture). There is simply one and only one God allowed in scripture teaching. There is not One God, and then a lesser god. If Jesus is a deity, and there is only one God, then Jesus must be that God!
- 3) Mrs. Shamblin implies that Jesus was a created being (though she makes a point of not using that phrase—but in so doing she leaves one with the impression that it would be logical [in her view] to infer that He was created.)
- 4) Her application of scripture is contradictory and selective. Her discussion above carries a sense of over-confidence in her own holiness and "commitment." It seems that she is saying everything depends on the Christian's obedience and discipline—grace has no (or very little) role. Even the indwelling of Holy Spirit, in her view, is dependent upon a person's obedience. Is this not salvation by works?!

Conclusion:

Our desire is that Mrs. Shamblin would come to see the error of her beliefs and teaching about the person of Christ and nature of Christian living—and that she would confess Jesus as the Lord God come in the flesh. We truly hope Mrs. Shamblin will be convicted by the volume of feedback she is receiving and come to the full saving knowledge of a gracious God who stooped to human form for her sins and for ours. We mean this not to be "judgmental", but to heed seriously the warning of scripture. This is quite serious. For, taken together, her teachings constitute "another" gospel that is not by grace. Such a "gospel" is really no gospel (good news) at all. The Apostle Paul warns:

"Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned. As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned." (Galatians 1:8-9).

We do not wish this for Mrs. Shamblin or any who are influenced by her teachings. This is no small matter. Paul instructed the Ephesian elders:

"Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers...I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from you own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard!" Acts 20:28-31 (This would also apply to books that rise up among the Christians)

Can we can condone her books on weight loss and her attendant view of spirituality? What would the Apostle Paul say? Even though her books don't apparently refer to her erroneous doctrine of the person of Christ and she doesn't mention her denial of the trinity in her books—we ask: Does her "works" oriented approach to spirituality influence the reader and practitioner? Clearly, some of the things in the books are valuable insights and have helped many people. But, does the good outweigh the serious error, on the order of the kind Paul so strenuously speaks out against? Sooner or later, Mrs. Shamblin's thinking will infect her teaching like yeast in a loaf and lead Christians into error. We pray that no one would be like those "weak willed women" Paul speaks about in I Timothy 3:4 over whom false teachers gain control.

Some may say, "We read secular books written by people who are not believers, what's the difference?" Since all true wisdom is God's wisdom, there is some wisdom in some secular writings. But, the Christian ought to be careful about anything he or she reads. But, in the case of Mrs. Shamblin's writings, she is very straight forward in her presentation of "spirituality" and that is the difference. Would the genuine believer go to a liberal theologian for advice on scriptural interpretation? Of course not! Would a true follower of Jesus Christ go to someone who denies the full Deity of Christ for advice on how to follow Christ, even if it is couched in the context of losing weight? Therefore, we recommend Christians avoid the Weigh Down Workshops ministries of Gwen Shamblin.

What about the weight loss benefits so many can find? We pray the Lord will raise up others who hold to the truth of God's word and the Deity of Jesus Christ, who can address the subject of weight loss in the context of discipleship. To the glory of "*our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ*" (Titus 2:13).

*Chuck Gianotti 9/22/2000*