



*The Color of Water*

*(Theology: The Nature of God, Part I)*

- I. Introduction: Last week I asked, “What does God look like? Some of you may have read James McBride’s book, *The Color of Water*. The book is autobiographical and tells the story of McBride’s mother, a woman born Jewish but married to a Black preacher who died while James was fairly young. His story takes place in parts of NYC where I lived. The title of the book comes from the answer his mother gave him when he asked what color God is. She said that God was the color of water, which of course, is colorless (Read from pp. 50-53).

Last week we looked at some of the characteristics of God that Christians have thought about for centuries. I don’t know if you spend any time thinking about the character of God but I hope that you will. Today I want to look at the notion of the Trinity, God being One in Three.

- II. The Trinity (see Matthew 3:16-17)

A. General Idea

- i. God is three Persons
- ii. Each Person is fully God
- iii. There is one God

B. Some Heresies

- i. To say there is one person who appeared in three different forms (*modalism*. A form of this exists today within so-called “Jesus Only” churches)
- ii. To deny that the Son and the Spirit are God (in ancient times this was called *Arianism*, now we associate this view with the so-called Jehovah’s Witnesses)
- iii. To say that there are three gods (*tritheism*)

C. Illustrations and Analogies

- i. Artwork
- ii. Science (egg? H<sub>2</sub>O?)

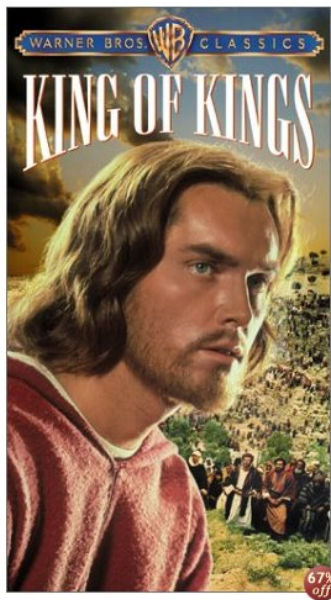
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III. Jesus is Fully God and Fully Man

- A. The deity of the Son (e.g., John 1:1; 5:18; 8:58; 10:31; Colossians 1:15-20; 2:9; Hebrews 1:3)
- B. The humanity of the Son
- C. OK, If Jesus was a man, what did he look like?



*Not like this!*

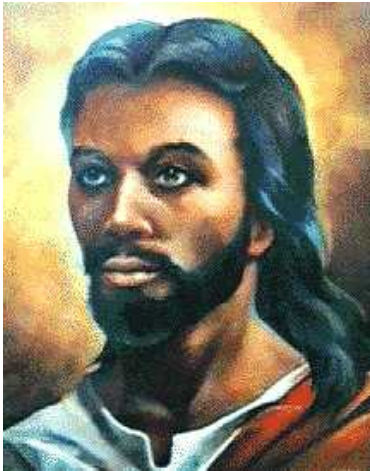


*And PLEASE...not like this!*

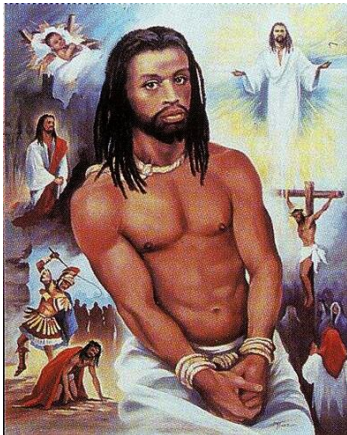
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*Nor like this!*



*Is this any better?*



*Or is this?*

*Was Jesus Black?*

*Look at Revelation 1:12-16*

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*But reflect on Isaiah 53:1-2*

*And consider Matthew 26:48*

IV. Holy Spirit is God (e.g., Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; Ephesians 4:30)

V. So What?

A. Why does the Trinity matter?

- i. Could a mere human being provide salvation for the world?
- ii. How could a created being bear the full wrath of God for all the sins of humanity?
- iii. Wouldn't it be wrong to worship Jesus (see Philippians 2:9-11) if he were not God?
- iv. If the Holy Spirit is not God, how could he provide new life? (See John 3:5-8; Romans 8:13; 1 Peter 1:2)

B. How might an understanding of the Trinity help us in our spiritual practices and disciplines?