God of Order

I. Knowing God

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

God is a God of order not the author of confusion. He formed the heavens and the earth. He created this world and all that is in it. Fish or fowl, man or beast, there is logic and reason as to how they were created. There is similarity in all their physical systems. Animals breathe in oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. Cells do many of the same functions. All of these things scream out that God has an orderly mind. It is this orderly mind that desires his people to understand who he is. When God created this world, he made man in his own image. He created language that we might understand each other as well as understand him.

Because of all of this, I believe that there is a great fallacy in the religious world. The idea that man cannot understand who and what God is has been widely accepted for generations. But the time has come for this fallacy to fall by the wayside. When people say we cannot know God because of our finite minds, they are dismissing the power and ability of God to teach his people. God has created man with the intelligence to fathom the atom; explore the bounds of the universe, and to have rule and dominion over the earth. Surely, with all God's ability and power, he can create ways of explaining himself to us.

Christians all agree that God sent his son for us. But why? Did Jesus "just" come to die? No. What was he doing during his 3½ years of ministry? He was healing, doing miracles, and raising the dead. But more than anything, he was teaching. All we need to do is to look to his own statements to see what was going on:

*About the middle of the festival Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach. The Jews were astonished at it, saying, "How does this man have such learning, when he has never been taught?" Then Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me. Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own. Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and there is nothing false in him"* (John 7:14-18).

Why would Jesus come teaching if it was not possible for us to understand? Do we understand everything that Jesus and the apostles taught except for who and what God is? I don’t think so. Did Jesus ever explain to people about who or what God is? Yes. Then why did he? It was because he expected us to understand it.
John 17:3 "and this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

In the mind of Jesus, knowing God is essential to eternal life. The Scriptures are written so that we may believe and have life. How can we claim that it is impossible for us to understand the mystery of who and what God is? Jesus himself tells us that eternal life is predicated on knowing the only true God.

II. Mysteries

According to the Catholic Church:

The Vatican Council has explained the meaning to be attributed to the term mystery in theology. It lays down that a mystery is a truth which we are not merely incapable of discovering apart from Divine Revelation, but which, even when revealed, remains "hidden by the veil of faith and enveloped, so to speak, by a kind of darkness" (Constitution, "De fide. cath.", iv). In other words, our understanding of it remains only partial, even after we have accepted it as part of the Divine message ... (http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15047a.htm)

I have a problem with this statement. According to John:

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin 1 John 1:5-7).

It has long been said by "traditional" Christianity that three "persons" are God. Yet, it is supposed that the three together are "One" God. When questioned about the lack of Scriptures that actually present that equation, the question is most often dismissed with the assertion that it is "a mystery." It is supposed to be a mystery that cannot be understood by human beings. Yet, it is also asserted that this mystery must be believed in order to be saved! Would our God of love require humans to believe something that the Bible does not directly say in order for them to be saved? Would that be in keeping with our God of love, order and reason?

When the scribes and Pharisees caught a woman in adultery, they brought her before Jesus. In the middle of their accusations, he bent down and wrote on the ground. What he wrote is a mystery. But, what if I taught that it is "necessary for our salvation" that we all believe he wrote down the Hebrew alphabet? What gives me the right to declare what the scriptures have not? Who am I to say anything is necessary for us to be saved when the bible never did? I do not have the right, and I cannot make that declaration. That is my point. God is not going to expect us to understand something that he has not explained.
III. Saving Grace – I Timothy 2:3-7

I believe that God really is a God of order. And if this is true, then it would make sense that God himself would "make sense." He has taught his people many, many things over the years. For example, we know that Jesus died for our sins. We know that it is sin that has caused a rift between us and God. We know that God is love. The question I have is: "How complicated were the Scriptures that taught us those things?" In my opinion, they're not complicated at all. So why would we think that God's explanation as to who and what he is would be any more complicated than those things? Here is just one example of the uncomplicated words of the Scriptures about God:

This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all —this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle... (I Timothy 2:3-7).

What exactly is Paul expecting us to understand from what he wrote here? More than that, what is God expecting us to understand? It is not hard. Paul is telling us in simple and direct terms that: (a.) God wants all men to be saved; (b.) he wants all to come to a knowledge of the truth; (c.) that there is one God and (d.) one mediator (go-between) between God and human beings; (e.) that mediator is Christ Jesus; (f.) who himself is a human being. That is simple and direct understanding about God and Jesus.

Paul says nothing here about an incomprehensible idea that three persons are one God! That is not identified as being the "truth" that "God wants all men to come to the knowledge of." Rather, Paul identifies that "truth" as being that there is "one God" and "one man" between God and humanity, and that the man is Jesus Christ. That reality is simple and clearly stated. That, is the truth that God wants people to know.

IV. Order, Sense, and Logic

The Scriptures do not contradict themselves. If we see a contradiction in the Scriptures, then there is something wrong with our understanding. There are thousands of verses in the Scriptures that talk about God. Not one of them says that God is two or three. He is always "one." It has been said that “you have to believe in the Trinity to be saved.” But the Scriptures never say that. In fact the word Trinity is not even in the Scriptures. Thousands and thousands of verses are in our Bible, and not once is the Doctrine of the Trinity explained. To me, if that doctrine were true, a God of order would have taken the time to explain it. We have plain speech saying that God is one and plain speech saying that Jesus is a man. Where is the plain speech explaining how the Father and Jesus are really both "one" God? I don't see it.
God did create this world. He gave us our minds, our hearts, our spirits. He designed us, and he chose to send us people who could teach us. He sent Moses, Elijah, and even his own human son Jesus. Every one of these men has told us that God is "one." Moses gave us the Shema (Deut. 6:4). Elijah did battle with the false prophets, while contending with them that his God is the "one" true God. Jesus, himself on more than one occasion, declared that there is only one who is God. John 17:3 and Matt 19:17 are examples. In fact, in both of those examples Jesus is showing a clear separation between himself and the one God. So if all the people that God sent to teach us are telling us that there is one and only one who is God, what do we expect that God wants us to believe? I believe that our God of order has given us an orderly, sensible, logical way to understand who he is. He is the "Father" of the man Jesus Christ. We find it in the clear words of his prophets – the clear words of his Son.

John 17: 1 After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."