



UNMASKED

Imad Awde



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Revelation 14:12

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep
the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

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*All verses quoted are from the
King James Version unless otherwise stated.
All emphasis supplied.*

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Preface

When I first joined the Christian circles, whether it was a denomination, ministry, or simply a group of believers getting together, I discovered that differences of understanding can become challenging to a new believer.

In my case, the topic of the Godhead played a major role in shaping my Christian experience. Within a few months of giving my life to Jesus and joining a church, I faced one of the greatest controversies, which for centuries has challenged the “church.” Now, it was challenging me.

It was only a few months earlier that I was taught the Trinity. I did not fully understand it, not many do since it is always tagged with the term “mystery,” but by faith I accepted it as truth and was baptized as a member of a denomination. However, when I was presented with an alternate understanding of who God is, I determined to study the topic deeper.

I began asking myself questions like: What exactly is the Trinity? Do I know what I believe? What does the Bible have to say about God? Who is Jesus? Who is the Holy Spirit? Is the identity of God truly a mystery? Is there plain, scriptural evidence to answer my questions?

My study has led me to what I believe is the truth. It has given me a greater appreciation of God’s love and what He has done for me. It has given me a clearer understanding of one of the most cherished doctrines, “*Righteousness by faith*,” and has transformed it from a theological idea to a practical reality. It has set me free from the deception,

which according to the Bible will cause the whole world to wonder after the beast and worship the dragon (Revelation 13:3, 4).

Because of the joy I received from studying this topic, I have decided to write this book with you in mind. My aim in writing this book is not only to share with you my understanding of the Godhead topic, but also to tell you how this truth practically affected my spiritual life, and to enable you to share it with others.

I have included at the end of the book a series of Bible studies which you could use to share the truth with others.

SECTION 1

Chapter 1



Why Bother?

Since hearing about and deciding to study the Godhead issue, I have been repeatedly told, in one way or another, “Why bother?” Why trouble yourself to study this topic? Why cause problems by studying something controversial? Why try to understand God when it is a mystery?

If it was not a question, it came in the form of a statement, “This topic is not salvational, it is not important, we will never know the answer for sure, just leave it alone.”

Have you ever said or been told something similar? I bet you would answer “yes.”

So, why study this topic and cause problems that we can easily avoid by simply adhering to whatever our church, group, or ministry teaches? Jesus was once challenged by the Pharisees regarding His disciples eating with unwashed hands. You see, at that time, the Jews had a man-made tradition that required every Jew to ceremonially wash their hands in a certain way, even if water was not available. They were simply going through a ritualistic motion to fulfill a man-made tradition.

To their challenge, Jesus said “*Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*” He went on to say “*Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.*” Mark 7: 6, 7, 13

This passage speaks directly to the situation we are faced with today. When God’s people replace the teachings of God with the teachings

of men, Jesus said their worship becomes meaningless, worthless, purposeless, or useless. Not only that, but He gives us the reason why: it is because they honor “*me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.*”

Contextually speaking, this was the condition of a Jew who outwardly professed God, yet inwardly was unwilling to accept the Messiah and let go of man-made traditions, known as “*the commandments of men.*” The anti-type of this is today’s Christian who outwardly professes God, but inwardly is unwilling to let go of man-made traditions, teachings, and doctrines.

Jesus’ answer to our quandary is very clear. Seek the Word of God; seek the teachings of God; let go of man’s traditions, otherwise your worship of Me will be worthless. No doubt, the one who rejects man-made teachings will be rejected by the denominations of today, just like Jesus was rejected by the denomination of His day.

God wants us to know Him; He is not pleased when we hide behind man-made traditions and as a result refuse to honestly study the Scriptures in search of an answer to this topic. To the Israelites of old He said:

“Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.”

Hosea 4:1

God had a controversy with the inhabitants of the land because there was *lack of knowledge of God in the land*. As a matter of fact, a few verses later God said:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” Hosea 4:6

God wants us to know Him because He wants to develop a relationship with us. The more we know God, the closer our relationship will be. That is why, like Hosea, we ought to desire “*the knowledge of God*” more than anything else (Hosea 6:6). In light of this, notice what Jesus said:

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3

By the term “*know*,” Jesus did not simply mean knowing the identity of God and Himself, but having a personal and intimate relationship. Nevertheless, such a relationship must entail knowing Their identity. This flies in the face of the notion that God is a mystery and we cannot know who He is. How can my eternal life be based on knowing and having a relationship with a mystery? This does not make sense at all.

Please note, I am not suggesting that we can understand the nature of God. Not at all. God’s nature is way above our comprehension. This book is not a quest to explain the nature of God, it is limited to the *identity* of God. God’s identity is not a mystery.

As matter of fact, the Bible says that through creation, God has made “*his eternal power and Godhead*” known (Romans 1:20). Not only that, but because God so loved us, and longed to have a close relationship with us, He sent His Son to declare God to us. Notice what John said:

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”
John 1:18

Jesus, the Son of God, revealed and made known “God” to us. When Christians say “God is a mystery, we cannot know Him;” they are in effect saying Jesus failed in His mission. Notice what else John said:

“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.” 1 John 5:20

Jesus, the Son of God, has given us an understanding that we may know God. We are left with no excuse. God has revealed Himself to us through His creation, and again through His Son Jesus.

To hold onto tradition and man-made teachings, instead of studying the Scriptures in search of the answer to the topic under discussion, is tantamount to *honoring God with our lips, but denying Him in our hearts.*

In His discussion with the Pharisees regarding eating with “unwashed hands” and holding onto traditions, rather than the Word of God, Jesus went on to say that because of their conduct, they were “*Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition.*” Mark 7:13 It is interesting, as you will see later in the book, that in the process of defending man-made doctrines relating to the Godhead, theologians and teachers had made “*the word of God of none effect.*”

I, like many others, have studied this topic from the Scriptures with much prayer, and have found the answer. God is not a mystery; we can know Him; in fact, it is crucial to know who He is.

What could possibly be more important in our relationship with God than to actually know who He is? Our obedience and love to God should be the by-product of knowing Him, understanding His love for us, and having a relationship with Him.



The Trinity

When I first heard the truth about God and His Son, I did not understand its importance because I did not see the difference between the Trinity and what I was being told.

Since my baptism, I believed in the Trinity. However, I never really understood what the Trinity was. All along, I thought the Trinity is a word we use to refer to God the Father, His Son Jesus, and Their Spirit, the Holy Spirit. Naively, I thought all Christians understand the Trinity as I did.

However, since I came face to face with this controversy, I had to understand what the Trinity was in order to contrast it with what I was hearing. How could I determine whether the Trinity was true or false if I did not understand it? Moreover, to complicate things, the more people I spoke to in my church—whether lay members, elders, pastors, or theologians—, the more varying were the explanations I received.

That is why I thought it would be beneficial for the reader to know exactly what the Trinity doctrine is before looking at the biblical evidence. When Trinitarians say, “one God,” “Son of God,” “Spirit of God,” and “Trinity,” what do they mean exactly?

In simple language, the Trinity doctrine is one God that is made up of three, divine persons. What does this mean? Well, here is the Athanasian Creed:

“But this is the catholic [universal] faith: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity; Neither confounding the persons; nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father: another of the Son: another of the Holy Ghost. But the

Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Ghost uncreated. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal. As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated, but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet they are not three Almighties, but one Almighty. So the Father is God: the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God; And yet there are not three Gods; but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords, but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord. So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say, there are three Gods, or three Lords. The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity none is before or after another: none is greater or less than another. But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity." (The Athanasian Creed as quoted in Philip Schaff's History of the Christian Church, Volume 3, Section 132, page 690-693)

Complicated? Yes, it is.

There is a lot of information in the above creed that you could spend time analysing and studying, and no doubt, there is much truth in it. However, the little, unscriptural phrases are enough to poison the whole thing. I will highlight some thoughts from it:

“For there is one person of the Father: another of the Son: another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.”

This tells us: there are three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost). These three persons possess the same Godhead.

“So the Father is God: the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God; And yet there are not three Gods; but one God.”

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are individually God in their own right, yet the three of them make up one God.

“And in this Trinity none is before or after another: none is greater or less than another. But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal.”

The Father is not before the Son and so forth. They are all co-eternal.

“The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten.”

Here it becomes a little more complicated and mysterious. Earlier we read *“none is before or after another. . . . co-eternal together.”* Yet in the same creed, we read that Jesus is “begotten.” This sounds contradictory. The way this is explained is by stating that Jesus is eternally begotten:

“The only-begotten Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father.” (Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed; cf. DS 150)

The “eternally begotten” teaching is at times called the “eternal generation of the Son.” Here is how the theologian Louis Berkhof explains it:

“It is that eternal and necessary act of the first person in the Trinity, whereby He, within the divine Being, is the ground of a second personal subsistence like His own, and puts this second person in possession of the whole divine essence, without any division, alienation, or change.” (“Berkhof on the Eternal Generation of the Son”, Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology, p. 94)

I do not want us to be bogged down into these mysterious definitions, but for clarification purposes, I will share my understanding of this term based on the research I did.

Eternal generation of the Son means that the first person of the Trinity, the Father, is eternally and continually (from all eternity and never ceasing) begetting the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, yet without producing two gods. The term “eternal” removes this relationship of Father-Son from the limitations of time and space; there was no beginning, nor will there be an end to the generation of the Son from the Father. The term “necessarily” removes any dependence between the Father and the Son in relation to their existence; the Son must be generated from the Father, and the Father must generate the Son. That is just how it had to be. We cannot fully understand it because it is a mystery to the human mind.

Having said this, I want to point out that the end result is a philosophical and mysterious argument to maintain that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are co-eternal as the Athenasian creed has stated. Hence, the Father and Son is not a real relationship. There cannot be a real Father and Son because they are co-eternal. The Father was not before the Son, neither is the Son’s existence dependent on the Father. Yes, the argument does use some correct terminology, but the theology behind the terminology is destructive and faulty.

I must admit that the doctrine of eternal generation, as mysterious and incomprehensible as it is, is the closest to Biblical truth. However, not all Trinitarians adhere to this eternal generation teaching. Some, especially Protestants, have seen its lack of logic and scriptural evidence, and have adopted other beliefs:

1. Some believe the Second person of the Trinity became the Son of God at the incarnation. He was not the Son of God prior to the incarnation. Here are some examples:

Dake’s Annotated Reference Bible in its comment under Acts 13:33 strongly rejects the doctrine of eternal Sonship by stating:

“As God, the person we now know of as Jesus Christ had no beginning, was not begotten, was not a Son, and did not come into being ... but as man and as God’s Son He was not eternal, He did have a beginning, He was begotten, this being the same time Mary had a Son. Therefore, the doctrine of eternal sonship of Jesus Christ is irreconcilable to reason, is unscriptural, and is contradictory to

itself.” [Finis Jennings Dake, Dake’s Annotated Reference Bible (Lawrenceville, GA: Dake Bible Sales, 1963) 139 (N.T).]

Dr. Walter Martin, a well-known theologian and author of a classic book on the cults, has also rejected the doctrine of eternal Sonship:

“The Scripture nowhere calls Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God, and He is never called Son at all prior to the incarnation, except in prophetic passages in the Old Testament. The term “Son” itself is a functional term, as is the term “Father” and has no meaning apart from time. ... Many heresies have seized upon the confusion created by the illogical “eternal Sonship” or “eternal generation” theory of Roman Catholic theology, unfortunately carried over to some aspects of Protestant theology. Finally; there cannot be any such thing as eternal Sonship ... the word “Son” definitely suggests inferiority.” [Walter Martin, The Kingdom of the Cults [Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1985) 117–118.]

Note: As you can read for yourself, the above authors, and many others, have not only rejected the “eternal generation” theory, as I do, but have gone the extra step of denying the Sonship of Jesus prior to the incarnation.

2. Others believe the Second Person of the Trinity has been the Son of God from all eternity, but they add that the Father-Son relationship should be taken in a metaphorical sense, not in a literal sense. Here are some examples:

“Fourth, a human child comes from its parents through natural birth. In the case of the Godhead, however, the Son proceeded from the Father, not as a divine emanation or through natural birth, but to perform a work of creation and redemption (John 8:42; 16:28). There is no biblical support for the eternal generation of the Son from the Father. The Son came from God but was not generated by Him. Fifth, the father-son image cannot be literally applied to the divine Father-Son relationship within the Godhead. The Son is not the natural, literal Son of the Father. A natural child has a beginning, while within the Godhead

the Son is eternal. The term “Son” is used metaphorically when applied to the Godhead. It conveys the ideas of distinction of persons within the Godhead and the equality of nature in the context of an eternal, loving relationship.” *Adventist World*, November 2015 (“What does the Bible mean when it refers to Jesus as ‘the Son of God’”) also published on the *Biblical Research Institute* website <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/es/node/1185>

“The Father–Son relationship in the Godhead should be understood in a metaphorical sense, not in a literal sense.”
Max Hatton, Understanding the Trinity, p. 97

The one thing in common between all these variations of the Trinity doctrine is the consistent denial of the real Father-Son relationship.

So going back to our main point, to keep it simple, the term “Trinity” refers to **one God** in three persons. As Pope John Paul II defined it: “*The one God whom we worship is a unity of Three Divine Persons, ‘equal in majesty, undivided in splendour, yet one Lord, one God, ever to be adored.’ (Praefatio de SS.ma Trinitate)*” (JOHN PAUL II New Orleans; Saturday, 12 September 1987 also can be viewed on https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1987/september/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19870912_cattedrale-new-orleans.pdf)

This definition has spread everywhere within Christendom. Catholics and the majority of Protestants adhere to it. Here are some examples from Protestant churches:

Anglican Church and Methodist Church

The following is listed as number one in the Articles of Faith for both churches:

“There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions; of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” *Anglican Church* (<http://www.churchsoci>

ety.org/issues_new/doctrine/39a/iss_doctrine_39A_Arts01-05.asp)
and the Methodist church states the same creed (<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/the-articles-of-religion-of-the-methodist-church>)

Presbyterian Church

“In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.” (<http://www.presbyterian.org.au/index.php/index-for-wcf/chapter-2-god-and-the-holy-trinity>)

Seventh-day Adventist Church

*“There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three, co-eternal Persons.” (*SDA Fundamental Beliefs*)*

*“We do not believe in three Gods but one God in three persons. These three personalities participate in one substance. In the divine unity there are three, co-eternal and co-equal persons, who, though distinct, are the one undivided God.” (*Reflections*, page 9, *the Biblical Research Institute for July, 2008. Seventh Day Adventist Church.*)*

This is only a sample of many other examples.

It is also important to understand that in the Trinitarian understanding, the word “person” does not mean a “being”. Three persons do not equal three beings; that is why they believe there is only one God, not three. Most theologians prefer the term “hypostasis” rather than “person” because it is a word that refers to the theological concept of a person that is half-way between mere personality and an individual being. This concept is explained in the following way:

“The doctrine of a subsistence in the substance of the Godhead brings to view a species of existence that is so anomalous

*and unique, that the human mind derives little or no aid from those analogies which assist it in all other cases. The hypostasis is a real subsistence,—a solid essential form of existence, and not a mere emanation, or energy, or manifestation,—but it is intermediate between substance and attributes. It is not identical with the substance, for there are not three substances [or beings]. It is not identical with attributes, for the three Persons each and equally possess all the divine attributes... Hence the human mind is called upon to grasp the notion of a species of existence that is totally sui generis, and not capable of illustration by any of the ordinary comparisons and analogies.” (Dr. Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine*, vol. i. p. 365 as quoted in Philip Schaff’s *History of the Christian Church*, Volume 3, Section 130, pages 676, 677)*

This strange idea of God is so difficult to understand that even Augustine did not understand it. Augustine was the most influential church writer to define the Trinity, and is widely respected as an authority among Trinitarians. Of him, Philip Schaff wrote:

*“Of all the fathers, next to Athanasius, Augustine performed the greatest service for this dogma [the Trinity].” Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Volume 3, Section 131, page 684.*

Augustine said, “If we be asked to define the Trinity, we can only say, it is not this or that.” (Augustine, as quoted in Philip Schaff’s *History of the Christian Church*, Volume 3, Section 130, page 672)

Athanasius, one of the earliest and very influential propagators of the Trinity, “has candidly confessed that whenever he forced his understanding to meditate upon the divinity of the Logos, his toilsome and unavailing efforts recoiled on themselves; that the more he thought, the less he comprehended; and the more he wrote, the less capable was he of expressing his thoughts.” (Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter 5, paragraph 1, as quoted in Alonzo T. Jones’ *The Two Republics*, page 334.)

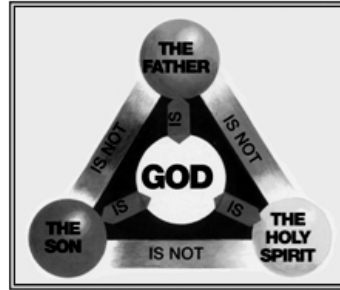
Athanasius and Augustine, the two men who did more to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity than any other, both admit that they did not understand it and could not define it. This concept of God, as

confusing and mysterious as it is, is the most commonly accepted view among Christians.

Here is how the Trinity is illustrated by various churches:



From the book *My Catholic Faith*



The New Pictorial Aid for Bible Study, p. 75 SDA

Tritheism

Another view that is not as widely accepted as the Trinity, yet as widely known is called “Tritheism.”

Tritheism is the concept that the one Godhead of the Bible is composed of three, separate beings/gods who are one in their nature, goals, plans, and purposes. This concept does not teach one God, rather it teaches one Godhead, which is made up of three gods.

Please notice point number 4 in the Athanasian Creed. It says, “*Neither confounding the persons; nor dividing the substance.*” The term, “*nor dividing the substance*” has direct reference to what is termed “Tritheism.” According to orthodox Trinitarians, Tritheism divides the substance of God into three, separate Beings, which would be three gods, hence it is labeled Tri-theism. Notice the following definition of the “orthodox Trinity” in which the definition of Tritheism is brought out.

“... the term person [hypostasis] must not be taken here in the sense current among men, as if the three persons were three different individuals, or three self-conscious and separately acting beings. The trinitarian idea of personality lies midway between that of a mere form of manifestation, or a personation, which would lead to tritheism, and the idea of an

independent, limited human personality, which would result in tritheism. In other words, it avoids the ... unitarian Trinity of a threefold conception and aspect of one and the same being, and the ... tritheistic trinity of three distinct and separate beings.” (Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Volume 3, Section 130, pages 676, 677).

Notice here that Tri-theism is defined as the idea that God exists in three persons who are “three different individuals, or three self-conscious and separately acting beings.”

In short, the Trinity teaches “one God made up of three persons,” while Tri-theism teaches “one Godhead made up of three beings,” hence three Gods.

Oneness/Modalism

Another view that is also known, but not as widely accepted, is “Jesus only” or Modalism. This belief teaches that there is one God, a singular, divine Spirit or being, who manifests himself as three modes/manifestation: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The core of this doctrine is that Jesus is the Father, and Jesus is the Spirit. One God reveals Himself in different “modes”. There is not three persons/beings; only one person/being with three manifestations.

Chapter 3



Truth vs Mystery

“Nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” 2 Timothy 1:12

Paul knew in whom he believed, for he said, “I know whom I have believed.” He was confident of his God and Christ. He had a personal relationship with Christ, and as a result was sure Christ had a future for him.

Paul knew the identity of his God. Do you?

“Why would you ask me such a question?” you might be wondering, “Of course I do. I am a Christian. I am a follower of Christ.”

If you are surprised at my question, then please let me explain. The identity of God today has been obscured and hijacked. Some years ago, I went to a particular church and put the following question to a few people separately. Here is the question; I would like you to answer it for yourself:

“The Bible says in the last days the three angels’ message will be given to the world. The first message says, *“Fear **God**, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”* (Revelation 14: 6, 7). Who is this God?”

If we are to point the world to the true God of the Bible, isn’t the knowledge of who God is an essential prerequisite to taking part in this mission? How can I tell the world about my God, if I do not

know who He is? To make it more complicated, how can I tell a misled or misinformed Christian about the true God of the Bible, if I am not sure who He is?

The Bible says this message is to be preached “*unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.*” It is to go far and wide. The focus of this message is pointing people to worshipping the true God. “*Fear God, give glory to Him, and worship Him.*”

To my dismay, I received different answers. Mind you, these people belonged to the same denomination, worshiped in the same church, had the same pastor, and read the same Bible.

I will not be surprised if your answer differs from your partner’s or friend’s answer. Why is that? Simply because the enemy has managed to convince Christians that God’s *identity* is a mystery or—to say at the least—it is so complicated that it is beyond human reasoning or understanding.

When I personally decided to give my life to Jesus and join a church, I was taught the Trinity and was told I should accept it by faith because mankind cannot understand who God is. I was given some printed material about the Trinity which was beyond my comprehension. Just like Athanasius, the more I read, the less I comprehended.

However, this is not what we read in the Bible, neither is it the experience of the apostles. In one of his letters, Paul commended the Thessalonians for reports he and other apostles had heard about them. He wrote:

“For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.” 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10

When the heathen decided to worship God, as a result of Paul’s preaching, they understood who the God of the Bible was. They knew the God of the Bible, the *living and true God*, had a *Son* called *Jesus*, and they were waiting for Him. Hence, they understood that the God of the Bible is God the Father.

Contextually, Paul said the believers in Thessalonica were preaching the word to others in many places (1 Thessalonians 1:8). The point is that these people heard the gospel from Paul and they shared what they heard with many others. The news found its way back to Paul. Based on the reports the apostle had heard from others about the Thessalonians, he wrote this first letter to them.

In other words, those who heard what the Thessalonians taught, understood that the God they needed to turn to and worship is God the Father. They also understood that Jesus is the Son of this God. Here are the same verses in the NIV:

“The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.” 1 Thessalonians 1: 8-10

This message was delivered from Jesus to Paul (Galatians 1:12), from Paul to the Thessalonians, from the Thessalonians to Macedonia, Achaia, and everywhere. The news found its way back to Paul. All along the message maintained its precision and uniqueness. A crucial part of this message was the identity of God. After all, that is what Paul highlighted in regard to the reports he had heard. Here it is again:

“... how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus ...”

I am sure if I was to put my question to any Christian who had heard the message delivered by Paul 2,000 years ago—whether in Thessalonica, Macedonia, Achaia, or anywhere else—, their answers would be united: “The one God of the Bible is God the Father. Jesus is the Son of the true and living God.” After all, that is what they taught.

Paul, and all taught by him, knew the God of the Bible. They were not confused; they did not worship a mystery.

In light of this, I find it very interesting how in Revelation, the last book of the Bible, we read about two women, one pure (Revelation 12) and the other corrupt (Revelation 17). Of course, the pure woman represents God's faithful people, while the corrupt harlot represents the apostate people, or corrupt Christians.

In Revelation 7, we read about God's faithful people in the last days represented as the 144,000. In Chapter 14, something interesting is said about them:

"And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads." Revelation 14:1 (American Standard Version)

The forehead is where your frontal lobe is found. It is the part of the brain with which you think and make decisions; hence, the place in which you make decisions relating to God and worship. God's people in the last days have the Father's name, and Jesus' name written on their forehead symbolizing their allegiance and worship to the Father and His Son. They know whom they worship; they know in whom they have believed.

While, on the other hand, notice what is written on the corrupt woman's forehead:

"... and upon her forehead a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." Revelation 17:5

This woman, symbolizing apostate Christians, worships or believes in a mystery. In her mind, the word "*Mystery*" is written instead of the names of the Father and His Son.

I find this very interesting in light of what is happening today. Paul and all who heard his message knew who their God was. They believed in God and waited for His Son from heaven. Today's Christians are confused about who they worship. The god they worship is enshrouded with mystery that no man can understand or comprehend.

Dear Reader, if you believe we are living in the last days, as we surely are, then these things ought to concern you. God revealed it to you

through John for a reason. He is not willing that any should perish. He wants to have a genuine and close relationship with you. He knows you and wants you to know Him, hence His revelation in the Scriptures. Please remember, we are not talking about the nature of God, we are only talking about the *identity* of God. Our quest in this book is “Who God is?” not “What God is?”



Biblical Monotheism

To come to the correct understanding of *Who* God is, one must consult the Bible, not tradition or man's philosophical ideas. The first and most basic fact we need to establish in order to study this topic is that there is one God.

The monotheistic (one God) teaching is a widespread belief not only within Christendom, but also in other religions, such as Islam and Judaism. However, not all monotheistic believers worship the same God.

- *Islam* teaches there is only one Deity or one God. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The word "Allah" used to refer to God in the Quran is simply the Arabic word for God. The Arabic Bible uses the same word when referring to God in John 3:16. However, here is what the Quran says about Allah:

"He is God, [who is] One. God, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, Nor is there to Him any equivalent." Surat 112 Al-'Ikhlās (The Sincerity)

This one verse of many, clearly states that God is one and has no Son. This could not be the same God as the One mentioned in the Bible. The God of the Bible begat a Son. (John 3:16, 1 John 4:9, etc.)

- Today's *Judaism* teaches there is one God, but they do not believe this one God is made up of three persons, neither do they believe this one God has a Son, or that Jesus was the Messiah. God is an individual Being who will send the Messiah one day.

The most important text to the Jew is called the Shema: "*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.*" Deuteronomy 6:4.

- For *Christendom*, the monotheistic beliefs are not all the same:
 - Some believe in the Trinity, which teaches that the one God is made up of three Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
 - Some believe in the "Oneness" or "Jesus only" belief, which teaches that the one God of the Bible manifested Himself as the Father in the Old Testament, as Jesus in the New Testament and as the Holy Spirit since then. In other words, Jesus is the Father, He is the Son, and He is the Holy Spirit. One god/being with three manifestations.
 - Others, like me, believe in one God (the Father), His Son (Jesus Christ), and Their Spirit (the Spirit of God and of Christ); two Divine Beings, yet one God (one Source) and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in you all (1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4: 4-6). More on this to come.

Going back to our point, the Bible clearly teaches there is one God. Both the Old and New Testament testify "*God is one*" (Galatians 3:20). Here are some verses for you to consider:

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD"

Deuteronomy 6:4

"As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one."

1 Corinthians 8:4

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ephesians 4:6

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 2:5

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." James 2:19

This truth was widely taught and believed by Jesus, the disciples, and all the Jews in the days of Jesus. Once, a scribe asked Jesus *“Which is the first commandment of all?”* Mark 12:28. Jesus’ answer began with the words, *“The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord”* vs. 29.

To a Jew, this was the most important verse to memorize. Every Jew knew it by heart. Notice how the scribe replied to Jesus:

“Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” Mark 12:32, 33

This was the confession of a monotheistic belief. *“There is one God ... none other but he.”*

Please keep in mind the scribe was not a 21st-century Trinitarian Christian. He was a first-century Jew. Jesus, the One speaking to him, knew that. Jesus was a first-century Jew as well. Before we read Jesus’ reply to the scribe, we need to understand what the scribe believed and what he meant by his words.

Who did the first-century Jews believe God was? Notice the following:

“Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God.” John 8:54

Please do not miss the intended meaning. Jesus told the Jews, “your God is my Father. It is your God who is honoring me.” This was the belief of the first-century Jews. Jesus knew what they believed. Another account is the discussion between Jesus and the woman at the well. The woman asked Jesus, *“Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”* John 4:20.

Back then, Jews and Samaritans had different understandings on where to worship and whom to worship, hence the woman’s question. Notice how Jesus answered her:

“Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.”

John 4:22, 23

Jesus told the Samaritan woman two things. Firstly, He told her the Jews have the truth about God. Secondly, He told her whom she should worship, or, who the God of the Jews is. He said, “*the true worshippers shall worship the Father.*”

The Scriptures are clear on whom the Jews worshiped in the first century. They worshiped God the Father. So going back to our point, when the scribe said to Jesus, “*Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he,*” who did he have in mind; who was he referring to?

It is obvious from Scripture the scribe was referring to God the Father, not to a unity of three persons. This was a perfect opportunity for Jesus to clarify to this scribe, and to us, the readers, that the one God of the Bible is a unity of three persons. However, instead of reading a clarification or a correction, we read an affirmation. Notice how Jesus replied, and how Mark recorded it:

“And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.” Mark 12:34

Based on the scribe’s answer, Jesus said, “*Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.*” This does not sound like an attempt to change the scribe’s understanding of who God is. Jesus affirmed the scribe’s beliefs and encouraged him to keep holding onto this belief. Moreover, note how Mark recorded the account: “*And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him . . .*” This is what Mark had been taught. Mark believed the scribe answered wisely, or correctly. Not only that, but he believed Jesus thought the scribe’s answer was correct.

Please do not miss the point: John Mark, the author of the gospel of Mark, was recording what happened. No doubt, he recorded things the way he understood them or heard them. Jesus did *not* say, “Since you (scribe) answered discreetly, let me tell you what I think.” Mark

believed Jesus was pleased with the scribe's answer, or to say the least, he believed Jesus thought the scribe's answer was wise and prudent.

Although some scholars disagree, the vast majority of researchers believe Mark was the first gospel to be written, sometime around the year AD 70. This is some 36 years after Christ's death and resurrection. If the author of "the gospel of Mark" was by then a Trinitarian, he would not have thought the scribe's answer wise. The insight this passage gives of Mark's thinking tells us he was not a Trinitarian, neither was the scribe, and certainly, Jesus was not either.

This passage alone leaves us with the understanding that the God of the Bible, referred to by Mark, the scribe, and Jesus, is none other than God the Father. Is this conclusion correct? Or is it based only on one isolated and misinterpreted passage? I do not think so. Here are some more verses for you to consider:

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." 1 Corinthians 8:6

*"Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God."
James 3:9*

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 15:6

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ephesians 4:6

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort ..." 2 Corinthians 1:3

Please allow me to highlight only one verse out of the ones mentioned. To me, 1 Corinthians 8:6 is one of the clearest verses in Scripture regarding this topic. Paul said, there is *none other God but one* (1 Corinthians 8:4). He was specific to his readers about who this God is. He said it is the Father. Then he added "*of whom are all things.*" The Father is the source of all things. This is the one God of the Bible. See also 2 Corinthians 5:18; Romans 11:36; Ephesians 3:14, 15.

To this he added, “*and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.*” After clarifying who the one God is, he said, and we have one Lord, or Master, it is Jesus. Then he adds, “*by whom are all things.*” The Father is the Source of all things, while Jesus is the Maker of all things. If this is not clear, notice what Paul said elsewhere:

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds ...” Hebrews 1:1, 2

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ ...” Ephesians 3:9

God the Father created all things by Jesus Christ, His Son. The Father is the Source of all things and Christ is the Maker of all things. Therefore, when the Bible says there is one God, it is referring to the Source of all things. According to Scripture, there is only one Source of all things, the Father. There are not three Sources of all things.

This is important to understand because the Bible refers to Jesus as God. Jesus is divine and worthy of our worship. He is begotten, not created. Unless we understand the foundational principle brought forth in the Bible, that the one Source of all things is the one God of the Bible, we will run into all kinds of confusion.

Jesus Himself said the source of His own life is the Father, “*For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*” John 5:26. In the next chapter we will look more at what the Scriptures say about Jesus. But for now, the Bible is clear on the oneness of God. The Bible teaches monotheism, but not any kind of monotheism. It highlights very clearly that the one God of the Bible is one individual Being whom we have come to call “God the Father.”

With this in mind, who is “God” referred to in the three angels messages recorded in Revelation 14:7?

“Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that

made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:7

He is none other than the one God of the Bible: God the Father. To confirm our findings, please note the following: John, the writer of Revelation after he was threatened and released with Peter by the priests and rulers, went back to their own company and joined their voices in prayer and thanksgiving to God. Please note their prayer:

"And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: ... For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate ..." Acts 4:24 - 27

It is obvious from John's prayer in Acts 4 that he believed "God" who "made heaven, and earth, and the sea" is none other than God the Father. Jesus is "the holy child" of the God referred to in Revelation 14:7.

Chapter 5



A Son Is Given

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

About 700 years before Christ came to Earth, Isaiah wrote the above prophecy. He said, *“unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.”* Most readers miss the accuracy of the words, *“For unto us a child is born,”* clearly stating that a child will be born for us. The angel announced the fulfillment of this prophecy when he said, *“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”* Luke 2:11.

The birth of the child Jesus fulfilled the first part of this prophecy. However, the first phrase is based on the phrase that follows it, *“unto us a son is given.”*

Both phrases meet their fulfillment in one Person, Jesus Christ our Lord, however, each phrase highlights a different aspect. The first phrase highlights the birth of Jesus as a Child, while the other phrase highlights the sacrifice God made.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.” A child was born, but a Son was given. For the Child Jesus to be born as the Saviour of the world, God had to give His Son to the human race. It is crucial to understand this point. Missing it undermines the love of God.

Paul and other writers highlight the fulfillment of the second phrase:

*“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” Galatians 4:4
(See also Romans 8:32)*

The wording is very clear for a reason. *“God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.”* God had a Son first, and because He loved us, He sent the Son He already had into the world. When this took place, a child was born unto us.

Jesus’ Sonship is not dependent on His incarnation. His Sonship extends back to the days of eternity, before anything was ever created or made. John highlights the same point in the following verses:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:9, 10

“And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” 1 John 4:14

God chose to manifest His love towards us by giving us His Son (1 John 4:9, 10). To believe Jesus’ Sonship is based on the incarnation is to destroy the love of God. Every parent understands the love they have towards their child. As human beings with the ability to procreate, we can understand the love and sacrifice of God on a deeper level. What lesson do you think God wanted us to learn from the story of Abraham offering up his son Isaac?

Jesus’ Sonship is the basis of understanding God’s love. After all, it is who Jesus claimed to be. He freely and clearly said who He was:

“Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” John 10:36

Jesus never claimed to be the God of the Bible or God the Father. Yes, He did claim to be equal with God, and He did take the name of the Father upon Himself (I Am); but He also clearly stated who He is. It is not good practice to approach the Scriptures with preconceived ideas. When we do so, we tend to see what we want to see and ignore the rest.

For example, many quote the words of Christ where He said, “*I and my Father are one*” John 10:30, yet ignore His words, “*my Father is greater than I*” John 14:28. They also quote “*Before Abraham was, I am*” John 8:58, and ignore the words “*I am the Son of God*” John 10:36, or “*The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus.*” Acts 3:13.

If we want to know the truth, we need to set aside our preconceived ideas and let the Bible speak to us. The Bible emphatically and unequivocally testifies to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. Here is a short list of references:

- Paul preached it (Acts 9:20),
- the disciples proclaimed it (Acts 5:42),
- Christ taught it to Nicodemus (John 3:16),
- Jesus was crucified for it (Mark 14:62),
- the Father revealed it to Peter (Matthew 16:16),
- and twice proclaimed it from heaven (Matthew 3:17, 17:5),
- the soldier under the cross said it (Matthew 27:54),
- the devils believed and proclaimed it (Luke 8:28),
- and Jesus Himself taught it (John 10:36, 5:18)

Nowhere in Scripture do we read the term, “God the Son.” It is always the “Son of God.” Nowhere do we read God is three persons, we always read one God. If you are thinking of Matthew 28:19 and 1 John 5:7, this will be dealt with in Chapter 14.

I must admit, when I first heard this message, I immediately rejected it. To me it undermined the divinity of Jesus, making Him either a created Being or a lesser God. If you are sharing my concerns, let me assure you that nothing is further from the truth. Jesus is not a cre-

ated being, neither is He any less divine than God the Father. After studying this topic from the Scriptures, I realized that unless I come in line with who Jesus claimed to be (the Son of God), I am in fact dishonoring Him and indirectly attacking His divinity. At the end of this chapter I will share an analogy to illustrate how in denying the true Sonship of Jesus, the Trinity is an indirect attack on Jesus' true divinity and authority.

Biblically speaking, the Sonship of Jesus is the basis of His divinity. Jesus is divine because He is the Son of a divine Being. Jesus is God (possessing the God-nature) because He is the Son of God. Jesus is worthy of our worship because He is the Son of a Being worthy of our worship (John 5:18, 23, 26; Hebrews 1:4, 6). (For more information, see Objection 8 in Chapter 15.)

That is why, even though Jesus is God, we often read:

- The Father is the God of Jesus (Matthew 27:46; John 20:17, Ephesians 1:3, 1 Peter 1:3, Revelation 3: 12, Hebrews 1:9)
- The Father is the head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3)

These verses do not undermine the divinity of Jesus, nor do they take away honor from Him. If we are to believe the apostles, that Jesus is the Son of God, we will have no problem understanding these verses, nor will we have to twist the context to limit their application only to the incarnation.

Long before creation took place, the Bible tells us God brought forth a Son. We are not told how this happened, but we are certainly told it did happen:

“The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him ...” Proverbs 8:22–30

Some would like to apply this to the “wisdom” of God since, contextually speaking, that is what is being spoken about. However, if we literally apply the above text to the attribute of wisdom, we will run into deep trouble. The text clearly states that “wisdom” was “*possessed or brought forth*” at a certain “point” in the days of eternity before anything was created. If the text is referring to the attribute of wisdom, then by implication we are saying before that “point” God was not wise or did not possess the attribute of wisdom.

Moreover, the way the author records it, does not fit with an attribute. It is more fitting to apply it to a “person” or a “being”. Notice the following phrases:

- I was by him
- as one brought up with him
- I was daily his delight
- rejoicing always before him

Also notice how Wisdom is spoken of as:

- The giver of life and death (Proverbs 8:35–36).
- The giver of wealth (8:18–21) and security (1:33).
- The source of wisdom, counsel, understanding, and strength (8:14).
- The source of government, rulership, and authority (8:15).
- The source of happiness (3:13, 18).
- The source of revelation (8:6–10, 32, 34).
- The one who is to be sought after, found, and called (1:28; 8:17).
- The one who loves, and is to be loved (8:17).
- The one who calls to men and seeks for them (8:4).
- The one who leads in the way (3:17; 8:20,32).

This is not a language in relation to an attribute. It is referring to a person, Jesus Christ. From Proverbs 8:22, all the way to the end of

Chapter 9 applies to Jesus. Jesus is the “*wisdom of God*” (see 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30. Also compare Matthew 23:34 with Luke 11:49).

Furthermore, in Proverbs 8:30 we read:

“Then I was by him, as a master workman: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;” (Revised Version)

Contextually speaking, this is referring to the time of creation. The point of the text is that during the work of creation, Wisdom was there as a “master workman” or “architect, skilled workman”. With this in mind, please notice what we read later on in Proverbs 30:

“Who hath ascended up into heaven, and descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in his garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou knowest?” Proverbs 30:4

Again, while making reference to the work of creation, the author attributes creation to two Individuals, and identifies Them by relationship as Father and Son. The Son of God, Wisdom, was with the Father during creation.

In Proverbs 8:22-25, Jesus was speaking under the title of wisdom. He said “*The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, ... I was set up from everlasting ... When there were no depths, I was brought forth; ... before the hills was I brought forth*”. In other words, Jesus said “*I was brought forth (begotten) before anything was created.*”

That is exactly what Paul said “*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature*” Colossians 1:15. He is the firstborn before all creation. Jesus was begotten in the days of eternity. About Jesus, Micah said: “*whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.*” Micah 5:2 (marginal reading).

Notice how other translations put it:

- “... whose **family line** goes back to ancient times” (GNB)
- “His **origins** go back to the distant past, to days long ago.” (GW)
- “His **beginnings** are from ancient times, from long, long ago” (ERV)
- “... someone whose **family** goes back to ancient times” (CEV)

This is in perfect harmony with Proverbs 8. Jesus' *origins, beginnings, or family line* go back to the days of eternity. In the days of eternity, if we can use the term "days," Jesus was begotten of the Father. It is not an "eternal generation" theory. It was a one time "event"; God brought forth a Son. We are not told how, but we are told it happened. Our job is to believe the Word.

The New Testament writers, including Jesus, testify to the fact that Jesus was begotten of the Father. (1 John 4:9, John 3:16, 8:42, 16:27). Even writers of the Old Testament referred to God and His Son. See Proverbs 30:4, Psalms 2:12, and Daniel 3:25.

The writer of this text attributes the work of creation to two Beings, and identifies them as Father and Son. The divine Sonship of Jesus should not be contested by any Bible student. It is clearly presented in both the Old and New Testament. (There are more Biblical references in the Bible studies found at the back of this book).

Dear Reader, I am aware this topic challenges the foundation of most Christian churches and denominations. However, I want you to take your attention off the words I have written, and what you have been taught by your church, and direct your attention to the following words of Christ:

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:15-18

Jesus has built His church upon the truth God revealed to Peter. That truth was and still is: "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*"

Most churches today are fighting against this truth. They are not built on the truth of Jesus' Sonship. If you are wondering how I came to this conclusion, please allow me to explain.

The Trinity doctrine teaches the one God of the Bible is made up of three persons who are co-eternal. Neither is before or after the other. If this is the case, how then is Jesus the Son of God?

As we saw in Chapter 2, some have concluded that Jesus' Sonship is limited to the incarnation; others believe in eternal generation; yet still others say there is no real Sonship, it is just a metaphor.

Just in case you missed the point: The Trinity teaching destroys the Sonship of Jesus. It turns it into a role-play, not a reality. Therefore, the Father is not truly the Father of Christ, neither is Christ truly the Son of God. When the Bible says, "*God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son,*" the Trinity doctrine forces me to not take it literally because Jesus is not the literal Son of God. Hence, if the Father sending His Son is not real, why should I believe His love for me is real? How could I believe that He *loved* me so much to send His Son, when He had no Son to send?

As you can see, the Trinity doctrine blatantly contradicts the Sonship of Jesus. It destroys the foundation on which Jesus built His church. Is it a wonder that today's churches are sick, weak and ready to die, and full of people lacking in power and true conversion?

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

Psalms 11:3

Note: Keep in mind that Tritheism and "Oneness" belief present the same problem. Like the Trinity, both beliefs deny the real Father-Son relationship. Tritheism teaches three, co-eternal beings, while "Oneness" belief teaches one eternal Being/Spirit, denying the existence of a second Being altogether. This is tantamount to denying Jesus' divine Sonship.

Here is the analogy to illustrate how the Trinity doctrine, by denying the Sonship of Jesus, is an indirect attack on His divinity and authority:

In England, there is only one "King" (queen at the moment). Imagine there is a law that says "there is only one king of England, King James; whoever else claims to be the king of England, will be guilty of treason and worthy of death."

With time, King James has a son (Arthur), who is automatically considered of royal blood. He is given royal privileges because he is the son of the king. Wherever Arthur goes, he is treated as royalty and his word goes without any question.

One day King James and his son Arthur decide to start a colony in Australia. They send people over there, and in time

they multiply. Arthur, as the king's representative and son, visits Australia, saying he wants to form a relationship with them.

The citizens of Australia know the king and his son are royalty and deserve respect. No citizen is accused of treason for giving Arthur his rightful royal privileges. They all understand that James is the one King spoken about in the law, yet they also understand that Arthur is worthy of as much royal treatment because he is the King's son. He is of royal heritage. He is royal by nature. He has been given all authority by inheritance.

Imagine a scenario where Arthur's friends in Australia want to exalt him more and more to the extent they begin saying 'Arthur is our King'. Instead of saying 'Arthur, the son of the King', they start saying, 'Arthur is not the son of the king, he is King Arthur. He was not born of King James. Arthur always existed with James and has been a king in his own right as long as James has been king.'

Would this be considered treason? According to the law, it would be because the law said James is the one king of England.

What gave Arthur his royal privileges to begin with? It was his heritage, or his sonship to King James. Without his sonship, he is not worthy of royalty. By making Arthur another king beside King James, we destroyed his royalty, because we destroy his sonship. Arthur's royalty and authority is based on his sonship. An attack on Arthur's sonship is an attack on his royalty and authority.

Chapter 6



Another Jesus

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”

2 Corinthians 11:3, 4

Paul, under inspiration, warned the Corinthians about a deception that would introduce a new Jesus, a new spirit, and a new gospel. How is this related to what has been shared so far? Is there a link between the Trinity doctrine and the deception mentioned by Paul?

To add to this, John saw in the last days *“all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon”* who is *“called the devil and Satan”* Revelation 13:3,4; 12:9. This is a serious warning to which God’s people ought to pay attention. Paul warned about a deception that would introduce another Jesus and another Spirit, and John gave warning that in the last days *“all the world”* would worship Satan.

Of course you are aware Satan will achieve this through deception, hence the Bible says Satan *“deceiveth the whole world”* (Revelation 12:9). In other words, Satan will introduce a teaching, doctrine or philosophy that will lead people to worship him, thinking he is God.

How can we know if we have been deceived or not? To any Bible student, the answer should be clear; *“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them”* Isaiah 8:20.

The Bible admonishes us to “*prove all things*” 1 Thessalonians 5:21, to listen with an open mind, and test everything by the Word of God, to see if it is so (Acts 17:11). This is what I endeavour to do in this chapter.

With this in mind, let us go back to the warning of Paul and see what “safety net” he gives us. Notice what he said:

- “*another Jesus, whom we have not preached*”—This means Paul preached the true Jesus to the Corinthians. If we find out which Jesus Paul preached, by default we will know the false Jesus.
- “*another spirit, which ye have not received*”—This means the Corinthians received the right spirit. Again, our quest is to find out which spirit they received.
- “*another gospel, which ye have not accepted*”—This means they accepted the right gospel. The same principle applies here as well.

In this chapter, I will be focusing on the true Jesus so we can identify the “*other Jesus*.” Since the warning was given by Paul to the Corinthians, I will endeavour to limit my research to 1st and 2nd Corinthians, although I might have one or two verses from the other writings of Paul.

Which Jesus did Paul preach?

“And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” Acts 9:20

“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” 1 Corinthians 1:9

“For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.” 2 Corinthians 1:19

Paul preached Jesus, the Son of God, not God the Son. He did not preach a Jesus who is a part of God, or that He is the one God of the Bible. No, Paul clearly taught the Corinthians that Jesus is the Son of God. Notice what he tells the Corinthians:

“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” 1 Corinthians 8:6

There is only one God, it is the Father, of whom are all things. He is the Source of all things. And there is only one Lord, or Master, and it is Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.

Paul taught the Corinthians that the one God is not Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of this one God.

Notice what else he said:

“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” 1 Corinthians 11:3

The head of Christ is God. Again, Paul preached that the God of the Bible is the head of Christ.

“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort ...” 2 Corinthians 1:3

Repeatedly Paul taught the Corinthians that the God of the Bible is the Father of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the true Jesus preached by Paul was the Son of God, not God the Son.

Please keep in mind, the Corinthians to whom Paul wrote these letters were not members of any denomination we know of today. They were simply followers of the Way or followers of Jesus. The Scriptures they had are called today the Old Testament. In addition to the Old Testament, they had these two letters from Paul, and of course, whatever Paul and the other missionaries taught them face to face.

With the identity of the true Jesus in mind, let us test the Jesus of today with the One Paul preached.

Notice what is being taught today about Jesus:

- **Islam** teaches Jesus was a prophet like Mohamad. He was not the Son of God: “The most gracious has betaken a son!” Indeed ye have put forth a thing most monstrous! At it in the skies are about to burst, the earth to split asunder, and the mountains to fall down in utter ruin, that they attributed a son to the Most Gracious, for it is not consonant with the majesty of the Most Gracious that he should beget a son.” (The Qurán 19:88-92).

- **Bahai** faith teaches Jesus was just a man. He was one of the manifestations of God just like Moses, Buddha, Muhammad, and Baha'ullah.
- **Buddhism** believes in Jesus, but not as the Son of God. It teaches that Jesus was a wise, holy, and enlightened man who taught similar things to Buddha.
- **Hinduism** believes Jesus is just one of thousands of gods in which they believe. He is not the only begotten Son of God as He claimed to be.
- **Judaism**, as we all know, rejected Jesus as the Son of God and killed Him. They regarded Him as a mere human being.

How do we know whether the Jesus they have is the false or true one? *“To the law and to the testimony.”* We test their belief of Jesus with the one Paul preached. The religions mentioned above do not accept Jesus as the Son of God. They have another Jesus.

What about Christians? Paul's warning was mainly directed to Christians. Has another Jesus been introduced into Christianity, a Jesus which Paul did not preach? It is only fair if we apply the same test to the Jesus of today's Christianity.

It is my belief that the majority of Christendom believe in and worship another Jesus. As we have already seen, the Trinity teaches that the one God of the Bible is made up of three persons or hypostasis, all being one substance. All three are co-eternal. According to the Trinity, Jesus is the second person of the Godhead/Trinity. Hence, Jesus could not be the Son of God. He could not have been begotten of the Father in the days of eternity, because the Father was not before the Son. We already saw in Chapter 2, how some limited the Sonship of Jesus to His incarnation, and others stated the Father-Son relationship is not a literal one, but rather a metaphor.

If we are to be consistent and fair, we must apply the test we used on other religions to our own religion. Is Christendom teaching the same Jesus Paul preached, or do we have *“another Jesus”*?

Sad to say, the deception has crept into Christendom under the name *Trinity*, and has introduced another Jesus to God's people. Here are some examples to show that my conclusion is not without evidence:

"We are left with no alternative than to accept that Jesus could not have become a literal son of God in eternity—He could not be His own son. He clearly accepted that role for the purposes of the Plan of Redemption." (A few comments by Max Hatton on the book The Trinity: What has God Revealed, p. 4) (SDA Minister)

In another letter the same pastor said:

"Let me reiterate the teaching of Scripture—Jesus is Yahweh and therefore cannot be the literal son of Yahweh." (p. 6)

Max Hatton is not alone in his conclusion. Here is what another minister wrote in his book *Defending the Godhead*:

"Christ has always been the Son of God; and there never was a time when He emerged from the Father. That statement appears to solve all the problems about Christ's Sonship." (Defending the Godhead by Vance Ferrel, p.17—an independent minister/author)

Earlier in his book he said:

"The problem here is that these names (Father, Son or Christ, and Holy Spirit) identify Their work, not Their nature." (Ibid p. 7)

If the Father-Son relationship is only relating to their work, it is a title, an office, a metaphor, but not a real Father-Son relationship.

Another example is F. E. Raven, an influential teacher from the Plymouth Brethren Assemblies. In 1895 he said:

"Now, 'Son of God' I understand to be the title of Christ incarnate; I should hardly use 'Son of God' as referring to His eternal Person."

Here are couple of statements from Chapter 2:

"As God, the person we now know of as Jesus Christ had no beginning, was not begotten, was not a Son, and did not

come into being... but as man and as God's Son He was not eternal, He did have a beginning, He was begotten, this being the same time Mary had a Son. Therefore, the doctrine of eternal sonship of Jesus Christ is irreconcilable to reason, is unscriptural, and is contradictory to itself." [Finis Jennings Dake, *Dake's Annotated Reference Bible* (Lawrenceville, GA: Dake Bible Sales, 1963) 139 (N.T).]

"The Scripture nowhere calls Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God, and He is never called Son at all prior to the incarnation, except in prophetic passages in the Old Testament. The term "Son" itself is a functional term, as is the term "Father" and has no meaning apart from time ... Many heresies have seized upon the confusion created by the illogical "eternal Sonship" or "eternal generation" theory of Roman Catholic theology, unfortunately carried over to some aspects of Protestant theology. Finally; there cannot be any such thing as eternal Sonship ... the word "Son" definitely suggests inferiority." [Walter Martin, *The Kingdom of the Cults* [Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1985) 117-118.]

"Fourth, a human child comes from its parents through natural birth. In the case of the Godhead, however, the Son proceeded from the Father, not as a divine emanation or through natural birth, but to perform a work of creation and redemption (John 8:42; 16:28). There is no biblical support for the eternal generation of the Son from the Father. The Son came from God but was not generated by Him. Fifth, the father-son image cannot be literally applied to the divine Father-Son relationship within the Godhead. The Son is not the natural, literal Son of the Father. A natural child has a beginning, while within the Godhead the Son is eternal. The term "Son" is used metaphorically when applied to the Godhead. It conveys the ideas of distinction of persons within the Godhead and the equality of nature in the context of an eternal, loving relationship." (*Adventist World*, November 2015 (What does the Bible mean when it refers to Jesus as "the Son of God") also published on the Biblical Research Institute website <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/es/node/1185>)

“The Father–Son relationship in the Godhead should be understood in a metaphorical sense, not in a literal sense.” (Max Hatton, Understanding the Trinity, p. 97)

Satan has been very successful in bringing another Jesus into Christendom. As you can see, theologians, teachers and pastors from various denominations concluded that Jesus is not and cannot be the literal Son of God. The reason they came to this conclusion is their belief in the Trinity which forbids them from accepting the literal Sonship of Jesus. Hence, through the Trinity doctrine, Satan introduced another Jesus whom Paul did not preach.

Is it a wonder that one of the identifying marks of the antichrist is his denial of the Father-Son relationship:

*“Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?
This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.”
1 John 2:22*

The testing question is this: Is Jesus the literal Son of God or is He not? Paul said He is, the Corinthians believed He is, God the Father said He is, and Jesus Himself said He is (John 10:36).

What do you believe?

Chapter 7



The Holy Spirit

If we were to choose one prominent figure other than Jesus in the New Testament (NT), it would have to be the Holy Spirit. Much has been written about the Holy Spirit in and out of Scripture. The NT age, especially since Pentecost, has been named “the age of the Holy Spirit.” The book of Acts has been correctly called by many authors “The Acts of the Holy Spirit.”

The Holy Spirit is presented in the NT as much a Person as the Father and the Son. Many passages in Scripture lend weight to this conclusion. We read the spirit:

- Inspired the writers of Scripture (2 Peter 1:21)
- Filled the life of Christ (Luke 4:18)
- Convicts the world of sin (John 16:8)
- Testifies of Christ (John 15:26)
- Directs and speaks (2 Sam. 23:2, Luke 4:1, Acts 13:2)
- Can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30)
- Can be lied to (Acts 5:3)

As you can see, the Bible does not present the Spirit as a mere force or influence sent from God. To believe this is contrary to Scripture. A worse crime is to believe the Holy Spirit does not exist. I have never met anyone who believes in these falsehoods, but I have heard others claiming to know some who do. Hence my highlighting of these erroneous beliefs.

The Holy Spirit is a Person; this is the teaching of Scripture. However, because of these texts and others, some have made a leap of faith and concluded that the Spirit must be a *different* person from the Father and the Son. By *different*, they mean the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.

This is common teaching according to the Trinity doctrine. Here are a couple of examples:

After quoting a portion of the Athanasian Creed, the authors of an article entitled “Understanding the Trinity” wrote:

“This passage offers a paradigm statement of the orthodox understanding of the Trinity. As it makes clear, the doctrine requires not only that God exists in three Persons, but that each of the following is true as well:

- 1. There is exactly one God.*
- 2. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God.*
- 3. The Father is not the Son, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.*

But these three claims are in obvious tension. The first insists that the doctrine must be interpreted in the context of monotheism, the view that there is one and only one God. But the second claim insists that each of the Persons is divine, whereas the third tells us that there are three Persons. Apparently, then, the doctrine says both that there is and there is not exactly one God.” (“Understanding the Trinity” by Jeffrey E. Brower and Michael C. Rea, *University of Notre Dame*, p.2 (<http://www.andrewmbailey.com/trinity/Understanding%20the%20Trinity.pdf>))

Another author from a Protestant denomination writes the following:

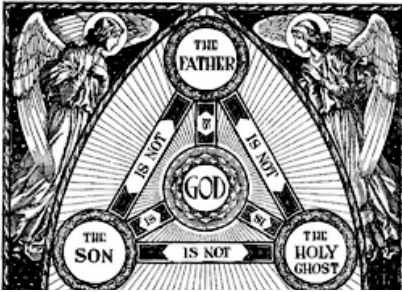
“However the “trinity” concept has proved to be the most adequate way to affirm all of the Biblical evidence about God:

- 1. There is one God.*
- 2. The Father is God, The Son is God, The Holy Spirit is God.*
- 3. All are equal and interdependent.*

4. *The Father is not the Son; Son is not the Spirit; Spirit is not the Father, etc.*
5. *The Father, Son & Spirit are all personal beings not impersonal forces.*
6. *Jesus became both human and divine.*
7. *God can be known through all three beings.”*

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And here it is in the diagram again:



From the book
My Catholic Faith



The New Pictorial Aid for Bible Study, p. 75, SDA

I want to reiterate something I said earlier—it is a leap of faith to say that the Holy Spirit is a different Person from the Father and the Son. Yes, the Holy Spirit is as much a Person as the Father and the Son are persons, but this does not automatically mean it is a *different* Person from Them. Please allow me to explain.

The first thing I need to clarify, dear Reader, is that no human being understands the nature of the Spirit. Hence, we will leave this topic alone. This is not a study about the nature of the Holy Spirit, it is a study about the identity of the Holy Spirit.

If we go back to the beginning of humanity, we read the following words:

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

Genesis 1:26, 27

We have been created in the image and likeness of God. We are not the express image of God; only one Being, Jesus, is referred to as the “*express image*” of God (Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:15, 16; 2 Corinthians 4:4). However, we are made in His image; hence, we can learn something about God by looking at ourselves. (If you are thinking the word “our” likeness must mean a Trinity, please refer to Objection 2 in Chapter 15 where I will deal with this verse).

As we continue reading the account of creation, we discover man is made up of two things: a bodily form and a spirit.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Genesis 2:7

Human Body + Human Spirit = Living Human Being

My spirit is not a different person than me. It is who I am on the inside. For example, when Nebuchadnezzar struggled with a dream, the Bible says:

“And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.” Daniel 2:1

Upon reading the term “*his spirit*” in the above verse, no one will understand it as referring to another person called “*his spirit*.” We naturally take it as referring to Nebuchadnezzar himself. It was King Nebuchadnezzar who was troubled; he was the one who could not sleep.

Keep in mind, we were made in the image and likeness of God. If my spirit refers to me, and Nebuchadnezzar’s spirit refers to the king himself, can we apply the same principle to the One in whose image we were made? After all, the Bible says:

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:11 (“even so” means “in like manner”)

The above text likens the relationship between man and his spirit with the relationship between God and His Spirit. Yet the text marks out a very important difference. While the spirit of man is “*in him,*” the spirit of God is not limited to His bodily form. (For more information on God’s bodily form please refer to *Lesson 6* in the Bible studies at the back.)

Going back to our question, can we say God’s Spirit refers to God Himself? Does the logical principle we saw in man apply to God and His Son? Let us examine some Scriptures to see what the Bible says:

*“And immediately when **Jesus perceived in his spirit** that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?” Mark 2:8*

You might think it naïve of me to ask the following question, but I have to do so to make the point. Who “*perceived*” in the above verse? Was it Jesus or another person called “*his spirit?*” I am sure your answer will be like mine; of course, it was Jesus. He perceived in His spirit, in His heart/mind, or on the inside of Him. Here is another example:

*“And he sighed deeply **in his spirit,** and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.” Mark 8:12*

Again, who was it that sighed? Was it Jesus or another person called “*his spirit?*” Are you getting my point? Simple! Naïve! Might be. But it is crucial, as you will see. Here is one last example:

*“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I **commend my spirit:** and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.” Luke 23:46*

Jesus’ last words were: “*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*” What did Jesus commend into His Father’s hands? Did He commend Himself, His own life, or another person called “*my spirit?*”

By now, I am sure you will be saying, “OK, we got the point, what does this prove?”

Here is what it proves: When the Bible says “*his spirit*,” referring to Jesus, we should understand it to be referring to Jesus Himself, not another person called “*God the Holy Spirit*.” When Jesus says, “*my spirit*,” we should understand it to be referring to the spirit/life of Jesus Himself, not to another person called “*God the Holy Spirit*.” Very simple, very basic, yet it flies in the face of the Trinity doctrine.

Here is why I say this. Please consider this text:

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Galatians 4:6

Dear Reader, intellectual and spiritual honesty demands consistency. And consistency demands a particular way of understanding this text. We saw earlier when the Bible said “*his spirit*” and “*my spirit*” in relation to Jesus, we understood it to be referring to Jesus Himself; His own life and Person, not to another life and Person.

Here we have the same “*spirit*” spoken about. Paul said to the Galatians, “God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

When Paul said “*spirit of his Son*” meaning “*spirit of Jesus*”, what was he referring to? Was he referring to the life and Person of Jesus, or was he referring to another person called “*God the Holy Spirit*”?

You cannot be honest with yourself and God unless you understand the Bible as it reads. Consistency, honesty, Scripture and logic demand us to understand this in only one way. That is, the life and person of Jesus Christ Himself, not someone else.

After hearing this, a brother once objected that the spirit of Jesus is different from the Holy Spirit. This was the only way this brother could reconcile what the Scripture is clearly saying, with what his church taught, namely the Trinity. To answer his objection I asked him to compare the following two verses:

“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto

you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10,11

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:20, 21

Both passages were written by the same apostle and refer to the same subject. Both are talking about the prophets of old who prophesied things to come. However, in his first letter, Peter says it was "*the Spirit of Christ*" in the prophets who inspired these prophecies, while in his second letter he says it was "*the Holy Ghost*".

Holy Spirit = Spirit of Christ

Going back to our main point, the Holy Spirit is presented in the Bible as a person, the person of Christ, not another person called God the Holy Spirit. This is never mentioned in Scripture. I will share more on this in the next chapter.

On the other hand, at times the Holy Spirit is referred to as the Spirit of God or the Spirit of the Father. Again, is this referring to the life and Person of God the Father or is it referring to another person called God the Holy Spirit? Notice how the writers of the Bible equated the Holy Spirit with the Spirit of the Father:

"But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." Mark 13:11

Matthew records the same words as follows:

"But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Matthew 10:19, 20

Holy Spirit = Spirit of the Father

The Holy Spirit is not another person other than the Father Himself. Consider the following verse:

“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Luke 1:35 (see also Matthew 1:18, 20)

The Bible clearly says *“The Holy Ghost shall come upon”* Mary. *“She was found with child of the Holy Ghost.” “That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”*

If the Trinitarian belief is correct, and *“... Spirit is not the Father,”* as the *Bible Studies for Youth* and other articles and creeds state, then pray tell me who is the Father of Jesus?

Please consider the following texts:

“And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:2

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him...” Matthew 3:16

“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30

If you have never heard the Trinity doctrine, and you are reading these verses for the first time, how would you understand the phrase *“the Spirit of God?”* Would you understand it to mean *“the Spirit which belongs to God”* or would you understand it to mean *“the third person in the Trinity called God the Holy Spirit”*? Please be honest with yourself.

The same principle goes for the term *“the Holy Spirit.”* This term is not a name, it is a description; it is referring to a *“Spirit”* that is holy. The Bible uses different descriptions for differing spirits:

“And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the LORD said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so.” 2 Chronicles 18:21

“And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.” Mark 1:26

To sum up what we have seen so far, the Holy Spirit is a Person, but according to the Bible it is not a different person from the Father and His Son. At times, we are told the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Himself, and at other times, we are told it is the Spirit of the Father. However, never are we told the Holy Spirit is a different person/being than the Father and the Son, and never do we read the term *God the Holy Spirit* in the Bible.

Just as my spirit is who I am, my person and my life, not someone else; even so, God’s Spirit is who God is, His very own Person and very own life, not someone else. When the Bible says “*the spirit of Christ,*” or “*the Spirit of your Father*” it is referring to Christ or the Father Themselves, not to another person called *God the Holy Spirit*.

In the next chapter, I will harmonize this seeming problem of “who the Spirit belongs to.”

Chapter 8



One Spirit

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Ephesians 4:4-6

In light of the previous chapter, the phrase “*one Spirit*” seems strange. We saw from Scripture, the Spirit referred to as the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of the Father, and the Holy Spirit. Yet the same Bible says there is “*one Spirit*” (see also 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 2:18). How could this be?

To answer this question we need to understand what the Bible means by the term *spirit*. Spirit means life, and can at times mean mind. Notice the following text:

Mind: compare Isaiah 40:13 with where Paul quotes it in Romans 11:34

Isaiah 40:13 “Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?”

Romans 11:34 “For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?” (see also 1 Corinthians 2:16)

Life:

“And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.” Luke 8:54, 55 (see also Acts 7:59 and Luke 23:46)

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” John 6:63

“And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” Romans 8:10

As you can see, the term spirit means life when it applies to either man or God. Just like the relation between man and his spirit, so is the relation between God and His Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:11). The Spirit of God is His own personality, character, life and thoughts. It is His Person. It is who He is. That is why it is as much a person as God and Christ are persons, because it is who They are; Their very own personal presence, not only Their power or influence.

However, the quandary remains. Why does the Bible say there is one Spirit when we read about the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son? Notice the following text:

*“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the **Spirit**, if so be that the **Spirit of God** dwell in you. Now if any man have not the **Spirit of Christ**, he is none of his. And if **Christ** be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the **Spirit** is life because of righteousness. But if the **Spirit of him that raised up Jesus** from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by **his Spirit** that dwelleth in you.” Romans 8:9-11*

While talking about the same Spirit, Paul uses the following terminology:

- Spirit
- Spirit of God
- Spirit of Christ
- Christ
- Spirit of him that raised up Christ

In Paul’s mind, all these terminologies refer to the same Spirit, which dwelt in the believer. I find it interesting that he calls the Spirit “*Christ*” in the same passage. Why would Paul come to such a conclusion?

Notice who Jesus said will abide in us when we receive the Comforter (Holy Spirit):

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” John 14:23

Upon receiving the Holy Spirit, we receive both: the Father and His Son. How could this be?

Firstly, we saw in Galatians 4:6 how Paul said “*God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts,*” and we understood this to be referring to the life or person of Jesus Christ Himself.

Secondly, notice these verses:

“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:19

“Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.” John 14:10, 11

God the Father was in Christ. How was it possible? The Bible gives us the answer:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,” Luke 4:18 (See Isaiah 61:1)

“And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD ...” Isaiah 11:2 (see also Isaiah 42:1, and Matthew 3:16)

God said “*I have put my spirit upon him*” Isaiah 42:1. We see it taking place in the incarnation when the Holy Spirit came upon Mary, and

confirmed again at the baptism of Jesus. All these instances clearly talk about “*the Spirit OF God*”, not “*God the Spirit*”.

The Father has a Spirit, the Bible says so; the Son also has a Spirit, the Bible says so, too; yet something happened in the incarnation and resurrection that allowed the writers of Scripture to say there is one Spirit. Jesus referred to this one Spirit as the Comforter or Spirit of truth (John 14:16, 17). He also said if He does not go away, this Comforter would not come (John 16:7). Here is why Jesus had to go for this Comforter to come:

“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)” John 7:38, 39

Probably this is the most important text in this chapter. John was very clear. He said this Comforter could not be given until the glorification of Christ, which of course took place after His resurrection. Jesus needed to be glorified in order for “*the Spirit*,” “*the Spirit of truth*” or the “*Comforter*” to be given.

Why is that? If the Holy Spirit is a different person than Jesus, as the Trinity teaches, then why couldn't he be given prior to the glorification? You see, the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets of old. The Spirit of the Father was poured on Jesus during His incarnation. However, it is important to understand the Comforter Jesus promised to send is not exactly the same as the spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets of old.

Through the incarnation, Jesus entered an experience He never had been in before. He became a man. He took upon Himself humanity, which He never had before. In Jesus, the God-man, God the Father dwelt. In Him, humanity and divinity united. He was born of a woman (Galatians 4:4), yet in Him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead (Colossians 2:9).

As a Divine-Human Being, Jesus conquered Satan and the grave. He gained an experience He had never had before. He authored a faith that did not exist before. Jesus is able to comfort the tempted and

tried, because He Himself was once tempted (Hebrews 2:18) and tried. He is our Comforter/Advocate (John 14:18; 1 John 2:1. Keep in mind the word translated as ‘comforter’ in John 14 was translated as ‘advocate’ in 1 John 2:1).

On the cross, the Father separated Himself from His Son, which led to His Son’s death. However, in the resurrection and glorification of Christ, especially highlighted at Pentecost, the Spirit of the Father was poured out again on Jesus without measure. The humanity of Jesus is a crucial element in His glorification. Remember Jesus’ prayer in John 17:

“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” John 17:4, 5

The God-Man Christ Jesus was asking the Father for glorification. As our Representative, the second Adam, as our Brother, He was asking for His glorification; and as one of us, He received this glorification at Pentecost (Acts 2:32, 33, 3:13; Hebrews 1: 8, 9). This was done “that he,” Jesus, “might fill all things” including His body, the church (Ephesians 4:9, 10).

The Spirit was poured out without limitation from the Father to the Son, the head of the body. From Jesus, our head, the Spirit flowed down to the rest of the body. The Spirit the apostles received at Pentecost was the promised Comforter. It is the Spirit of the Father coming through Christ. (This was typified in the anointing of Aaron as the high priest. See Psalms 133:2)

Through the glorification of Christ, the Spirit of the Son was united, or joined with the Spirit of the Father, resulting in having *one Spirit* which is both the Spirit of God and Christ (Romans 8:9-11).

This is the one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, that directed and spoke to the apostles; it was this Spirit that was lied to, and was to convict the world of sin. That was the Spirit John referred to when he said, “*for the Holy Ghost was not yet given*” (John 7:39). Talking about the same Spirit, Jesus said, “*It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*” (John 16:7).

This one Spirit is none other than the very life of Jesus Christ in which the life of the Father is found. In other words, this one Spirit is none other than Jesus Christ Himself in Spirit-form. When we receive the Spirit, we have both the Father and the Son (John 14:23), making the Holy Spirit the third agency through which God and His Son can be personally present with us, as the omnipresent.

Yes, the Holy Spirit is as much a person as God and Christ are persons, but it is not a different person. It is the very Person of Jesus Christ Himself, filled with "*all the fullness of*" the Father. In the next chapter, I will share many verses to emphasize this truth.

Chapter 9



Another Spirit

“For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.” 2 Corinthians 11:4

Paul’s warning to the Corinthians was not limited to receiving another Jesus, it extended to receiving another spirit. In the previous chapter, we saw that the Bible says there is one Spirit. Our quest in this chapter is to see which spirit the Corinthians received. Once we know which spirit they received, we will be able to know which spirit is the “other spirit.”

Again, I will endeavor to limit my references to the letters written to the Corinthians, since they are the ones under investigation. Consider the following:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” 1 Corinthians 3:16 (see also 1 Corinthians 6:19)

The Corinthians understood it was the Spirit of God which dwelt in them. Remember what we discovered earlier: “*spirit*” means “*life*.”

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:11

Your spirit is not a different entity from you. It is who you are, your own life; not your physical body, but your spiritual component, the

non-physical aspect of you. In like manner, God's Spirit is not a different entity from God. It is God Himself without the physical form. It is His own *life*.

However, the text marks out a very important difference. While the spirit of man is "*in him*", the Spirit of God is not limited to the bodily form of God. God can be anywhere present (omnipresent) through His Spirit.

Notice what else Paul says:

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Corinthians 3:17

Did you catch that? "*The Lord is that Spirit.*" Who is this Lord?

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." 1 Corinthians 8:6

Together, the above two texts bring out the identity of the Holy Spirit as clear as day. Paul said there is "*one Lord Jesus Christ*" and then said, "*the Lord is that Spirit.*" Paul taught the Corinthians that the Holy Spirit is Jesus Himself, in His divine omnipresence.

In light of this, I find it very interesting and relevant what Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." 1 Corinthians 15:45

This harmonizes perfectly with what we saw in earlier chapters. Jesus was made a life-giving Spirit. At Pentecost, the Spirit of Jesus descended upon the disciples. He came to them as the promised Comforter. He is the Spirit of truth. Notice what we read in Acts 3:26:

"Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Acts 3:26

God sent Jesus, in spirit form, to bless His people. That is what Paul said in Galatians 4:6:

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Galatians 4:6

According to Paul, the Spirit which the Corinthians received, is none other than the Spirit of Christ or the life of Christ. It was Christ Himself without the human form; a spiritual manifestation of Himself.

*“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that **Jesus Christ is in you**, except ye be reprobates?” 2 Corinthians 13:5 (see also Rom 8:10; Gal 2:20; Eph 3:17; Col 1:26, 27; 1 John 4:4)*

Paul didn't say you have the words of Christ, the thoughts of Christ, or the friend of Christ. No, he said Jesus Christ is in you. (See also Romans 8:10). And because God was in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19), when the Corinthians received Christ, they received both: the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ (John 14:23).

This is very important to understand because, according to Paul, receiving another Jesus or another spirit is a deception from the serpent who beguiled Eve in Eden.

What about today's Christendom? Is it the same spirit Paul shared with the Corinthians or another spirit?

Again, as we saw earlier, through the Trinity teaching, Christendom has received another spirit other than Jesus and the Father. Here it is again:

“The Father is not the Son, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.” (Understanding the Trinity by Jeffrey E. Brower and Michael C. Rea, University of Notre Dame p.2) (<https://www3.nd.edu/~mrea/papers/Understanding%20the%20Trinity.pdf>)

“The Father is not the Son; Son is not the Spirit; Spirit is not the Father, etc” (Bible Studies for Youth—Seventh-day Adventist Church. http://aucyouth.adventist.org.au/uploaded_assets/361517)

The doctrine of the Trinity has introduced another person/being called “God the Holy Spirit.” According to this teaching, it is ‘God the Holy Spirit’ who dwells in us, the “*temple of God*” (1 Corinthians 3:16), while Jesus is in heaven with the Father. Through this teach-

ing, a third person/being (God the Holy Spirit) has been regarded as equal with God, worthy of worship, reverence and adoration as God. Yet, every Bible student knows the term “God the Holy Spirit” is never mentioned in Scripture.

In light of this, I find it very significant what the Bible says:

*“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as **God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.**” 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4*

Chapter 10



How the Godhead Impacts RBF

“But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” 1 Corinthians 6:17

Since becoming a Christian, I have heard the term *Righteousness by Faith* (RBF) more than any other. Many books and sermons have been written about this topic and every church and Christian group I come in contact with claims to believe it. Legalists and liberals alike claim to have righteousness by faith.

What is RBF? In order for us to know how the Godhead issue affects the RBF message, we need to first understand what RBF is. Put simply, RBF refers to a righteousness received by faith. Notice the following text:

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference ...”

Romans 3:20-22

Please do not miss the point. Paul is not talking about man's righteousness. He is talking about the very righteousness of God Himself. He calls it *“the righteousness of God.”* Notice what he says in Chapter 10:

“For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Romans 10:3

The righteousness being offered to us is not of human origin; it is God's own righteousness. It is what Martin Luther called a "*justitia alienum*," an alien righteousness; a righteousness that belongs properly to somebody else. He went on to say it's a righteousness that is "*extra nos*," outside of us. Namely, the righteousness of Christ.

Paul is clear in his message. He is pointing his reader to a special kind of righteousness; a righteousness that could not be attained through obedience to the law. God has manifested His righteousness apart from the whole principle of law, the whole idea of legal obedience as a way of obtaining righteousness, and from the legalistic system the Jews presented as the basis of righteousness.

The righteousness of God is only available "*by faith of Jesus Christ*" to all them that "believe". The only condition provided is "*believe*". That is where the term RBF comes from. It stands for the good news that we can receive the righteousness of God by faith.

Now, of course, we are saved by faith alone, but faith that saves is never alone; it is always accompanied with a change. We are not saved by faith and works, we are saved by faith that works. The RBF message does not do away with the works of faith; but it does do away with the works of the law. There is a big difference between the works of the law and the works of faith. The first is the source of man's righteousness, the latter is the fruit of God's righteousness.

However, going back to our main point, RBF is the term used in reference to the righteousness I receive by simply believing in Jesus and accepting Him as my Lord and Saviour.

Notice what Paul wrote to the Philippians:

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith ..." *Philippians 3:9*

It is a righteousness that comes from God by faith, not as a result of me keeping the law, but of believing on Jesus. This is the biblical teaching of RBF. Very simple, yet very true and liberating.

My first question—when I learned the RBF message—was, “Why? How is it possible for me to receive the Righteousness of God by simply believing on His Son?”

Until I have learned the truth about God and His Son, especially the identity of the Holy Spirit, RBF was simply a theory in my mind. I had accepted it without any understanding. However, when I realized the Bible teaching of the Holy Spirit, I understood the deep implications of RBF. I was able to praise God from the depth of my mind and heart for His wonderful plan of salvation.

What is righteousness? Have you ever thought about it? If the righteousness we receive by faith is not based on obedience to law, then what is it? It obviously cannot refer to my actions or works. Yes, *righteous actions will be the fruit of an internal righteousness*; however, we are looking for the root or source of it.

Throughout the years, I have come across three different schools of understanding relating to God’s righteousness:

- 1. Actions:** Some interpret God’s righteousness as righteous actions. The focus is on actions; obedience to the law. The focus is on the do’s and don’ts. You determine your stand with God based on your obedience.
- 2. A change of a record in heaven:** Some view God’s righteousness as simply a change in God’s books in heaven. A change in God’s mind about the sinner. Before accepting Jesus, God saw him as a sinner, then God sees him as being righteous. The emphasis is on a changed record in heaven, and not on a changed life.
- 3. A Person:** There is an element of truth to both ideas (# 1 and 2), but they both miss the main point. I have come to understand this righteousness as referring to a Person. It is not a righteous action, neither is it a change of record. The righteousness God has offered us by faith is found in a Person because it is His nature. Yes, it will result in righteous actions but is not found in righteous actions.

Can one be holy without God? Of course the answer is: no. Why not? Because holiness is an attribute of God alone, hence without God you cannot have holiness. The same goes for righteousness. Righteousness is an attribute of God (Matthew 19:16, 17; 1 John 1:5;

Psalms 119:137, 142). Without God we cannot be righteous. Holiness and righteousness are attributes only found in God, because it is His own nature. As far as the human race is concerned, the only way we can become partakers of God's nature is through Christ (John 14:6). Hence, righteousness is found in a Person, not in actions.

Going back to our point, what is righteousness? Here are some verses to consider:

*"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**" Jeremiah 23:5, 6*

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption ..." 1 Corinthians 1:30

These verses testify that the Lord Himself is our Righteousness. Jesus Himself "*is made*" unto us righteousness. His name is the Righteous Branch. God said "... *their righteousness is of me*" (Isaiah 54:17).

Notice also what Paul said:

"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone ..." Romans 9:30-32

Why did the Gentiles attain to this righteousness and the Jews did not? What is Paul's point? The Gentiles did not trust in their own works, they trusted in God and accepted Jesus as their Saviour. The Jews rejected Jesus and trusted in their own efforts. Righteousness is found in Jesus. If you have Jesus, you have the righteousness of God, if you do not have Him, you do not have this righteousness.

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21 (see also Romans 8:1–4)

We are made the righteousness of God in Christ. In Christ is found this righteousness. He has been made righteousness unto us. In other words, the righteousness we are to receive by faith, or the righteousness we are saved by, is found in the life of Jesus Christ Himself. Notice what the Bible says:

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Romans 5:10

We are saved and made right with God, or made righteous, by receiving the life of Christ. Salvation and righteousness is found in Jesus Christ. *“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John 5:12.*

This is the essence of RBF. When a sinner repents and accepts Jesus as his Saviour, God imparts to him the Spirit/life of His Son (Galatians 4:6; Acts 3:26).

That is why the Bible says:

“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” 2 Corinthians 4:10, 11

The basis of the RBF message is found in the indwelling of Christ. The only reason we become righteous is because we partake of the divine—or righteous—nature of God, by receiving the life of Jesus Christ.

Notice what the Bible says:

“Christ in you, the hope of glory ...” Colossians 1:26, 27

*“... Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world ...”
1 John 4:4*

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love ..." Ephesians 3:17

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Corinthians 13:5

"... If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Romans 8:10

Allow me to point back to the first verse in this chapter: "*But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.*" (1 Corinthians 6:17). In other words, when a sinner repents, he exchanges his life for the life of Christ. This brings God's nature, righteousness, and sanctification. The life of Christ is the center of the RBF message. It is an exchange of life, not a modification of life.

Therefore, righteousness is found in a Person, Jesus Christ; it is not merely doing right but being right. And being right relates to our spirit or soul. It is an internal thing. It refers to who we are on the inside. When a person truly receives God's righteousness by faith, their life will change. Change always accompanies conversion because it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me. (Galatians 2:20)

What this means, dear Reader, is that the RBF message is based on each one of us receiving the righteous life of Christ: the Divine Person, which is Christ Himself.

All this is linked with a correct understanding of the identity of the Holy Spirit. Understanding the true identity of the Holy Spirit, that it is the life of Christ, helps us to know how we become one Spirit with Him. We become one Spirit with Him when we receive His very life.

The gospel, is about restoring *life* to man. The Bible tells us this *life* is found in His Son, and we receive it by receiving His Spirit. John tells us:

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” 1 John 5:11-13

Through the Trinity doctrine, Christ has been taken from the believer; instead of receiving His life, we receive another person/being called “*God the Holy Spirit*.” This is a direct attack on the foundation of the RBF message. We receive righteousness by receiving Jesus, not another person called “*God the Holy Spirit*”, who never experienced humanity, and was never tempted or overcame temptation.

After understanding the true identity of the Holy Spirit, RBF became a meaningful reality to me. It highlighted what Christ has done and is doing for and in me; hence it magnified Jesus in my understanding. Suddenly the words of Paul “*ye are complete in him*” became the highlight of my experience with Him (Colossians 2:10).

Truly, Jesus is all the world to me: my life, my joy, my all.



How It Impacted My Life

I am of the persuasion that unless a teaching has a practical impact on my life, it is almost irrelevant to me. Knowing that I am not the only one with such a thought, I have decided to include the following in this chapter.

Why do I believe it is important to study this topic and get to the bottom of it? What has it done for me? How has this truth affected my spiritual walk with God? Since accepting this truth, I have noticed some changes in me towards God. Here are some of them:

- 1. The truth about God and His Son increased my love for Them both.**

Understanding the true Sonship of Jesus amplified what God did for me and how much He loved me. As a father of three boys, I know what a father feels towards his son. The first time I read the story of Abraham offering up his son, emotion tore my heart. “How could he?” I thought to myself.

As a father, I know the love a parent has for his child. Every human parent understands. God was speaking to humans when He inspired John to write:

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” 1 John 4:9

God chose to manifest His love towards you and me in giving up His Son. He was the One who instilled this paternal love in our hearts. Why did He do that? Do you think it has any relation to understanding the plan of salvation?

When I brought my first-born son—Daniel—home from the hospital, I was the proudest and happiest dad on earth. That night I knelt beside my bed to pray and the thought came into my mind to experience what God has done for me. So I prayed, “Father, I want to experience what you went through for me. Help me to picture what happened to Jesus on the Cross as happening to my son.” I will never forget the experience. I could not endure the feeling for more than five seconds. I shook my head and said, “Sorry, Father, I cannot do it.”

God truly had a Son; He truly loved me so much that He was willing to risk losing His beloved Son in order to give me salvation. He truly gave His only begotten Son so I can live. A real Father gave His real Son. It was not a metaphor or role play. It was reality. This is love worth pursuing; *love* worth dying for, and more importantly, *love* worth living for.

Understanding this truth revealed God’s love to me in a way beyond what words could express. It touched my heart in a practical way. I thought I loved God, but when I understood this truth and contemplated its reality, my love for Him increased beyond measure. Furthermore, His love became a reality that can never be doubted or shaken.

Is it a wonder that John wrote:

“Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” 1 John 5:5

This is not mere theology. It is purely the outworking of God’s love. Realizing how much God loved us by understanding the real Sonship of Jesus, brings forth love in our hearts back to God. The Bible says “*We love him, because he first loved us.*” 1 John 4:19

The deeper my understanding of God’s love, the greater my love for Him. And the greater my love for Him, the greater my surrender will be.

2. It impacted my assurance of salvation and confidence in Him.

Understanding the truth about God has increased my confidence in God and His Son. Throughout my Christian life, I have spoken to many Christians from various denominations and have come across people who are resting in God and others who worry about their salvation.

I was never one to worry about my salvation, as I have trusted God. But at times I wasn't sure. Since learning the truth about God, I understand the sacrifice of God in sending His real Son, and the beautiful truth of Jesus' indwelling in me. My love for God has quadrupled. The increase in confidence and rest in God is amazing. Paul said:

"... I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Timothy 1:12

Paul had a lot of confidence in Christ. There was a time when I wondered how I could attain to such confidence. I no longer wonder. Now I know and I am persuaded that God is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him. How could I doubt someone who loved me so much?

Truly, *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"* (Romans 8:32).

My assurance, my confidence, my hope of salvation and eternal life finds a resting place in God's love and mercy. With so much love manifested towards me, how could I lose confidence! He is my Father; He loves me as much as He loves His Son Jesus. To me this is not mere theology or fancy talk. No, it is reality because I know the love I have for my children; I would give my life for them.

Yet, God the Father was willing to see His only begotten Son dying on a tree. He was willing to separate Himself from His own Son during His greatest trial, and willing to hide His loving face just to see me saved; just to give me another chance to be one with Him again. This was not a role-play, a metaphor, but a real Father offering His real Son—just for me!

My confidence and assurance in God was boosted like never before. I

am more than persuaded He is able to keep my life, my soul, which I have committed unto Him against that day. I can now say with Paul, *the love of Christ constraineth me*; (2 Corinthians 5:14).

O love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure
The saints' and angels' song.

3. It affected my prayer life.

Jesus told the scribe “*thou shalt love the Lord thy God with ... all thy mind*” (Mark 12:30). He told the woman at the well “*the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*” (John 4:23).

Before understanding this truth, I would pray to “*God*”, but in my mind I was not sure exactly whom I was talking to. Many Christians pray to “*God*” without knowing who He is. You can hear it in their prayers and discussions. I was once one of them.

After understanding this truth, subconsciously my prayers became more direct. I can talk to God the Father or Jesus His Son with the understanding that I am talking to a real person. I can have a relationship with God and His Son, knowing that I am made in Their image.

Recently a prayer partner asked me to share my belief about God and His Son. I did so and left it with him. A few days later, I could tell from his prayer the truth made sense to him. His prayers became more direct. The way he addressed God was intentional.

I have seen the effect of this truth in my prayer and the prayers of others. That is why Jesus admonished us to love God with our heart, soul, strength, and mind or understanding (Mark 12: 30, 33).

4. It impacted my understanding of RBF (*Righteousness by Faith*).

As I mentioned in an earlier chapter, the RBF message became a reality to me after understanding the identity of the Holy Spirit. My Bible says Christ in me is my hope of glory. It says I am crucified with Christ and He lives in me. It says God gave me eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Then it says he that has the Son has life.

None of this was literally possible with my previous understanding because it took Jesus away from me and gave me a different person/being called: God the Holy Spirit. However, when I understood the Biblical teaching that the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ, Christ Himself without His physical form, it all made sense. I understood the reality of it, and realized that if Christ is in me, I am righteous and saved because I have His victorious, righteous and eternal life within me. I realized that righteousness by faith is not just a theological phrase, or an unpractical truth, it is an actual reality that took place when I received Jesus into my life.

Jesus truly is in me. I have His life and righteousness because I have Him. I believe it and receive it by faith, as the Scriptures say. What a glorious reality!

5. It impacted my understanding of Satan's greatest deception.

The Bible says "*all the world will wonder after the beast,*" and those who wonder after the beast will end up worshiping the dragon who is called the devil and Satan. (Revelation 13:3, 4)

Have you ever thought about this? Those who wonder after the beast are described as "*all the world.*" Their number is so large that they appeared to John in vision as nearly everyone on planet Earth.

I could not understand how this would be fulfilled with one-third of the world being Christians. I now understand how it is possible. The sad reality is that we are witnessing it with our own eyes. What Paul feared has already happened, and the majority of Christians are totally unaware. Satan has managed to introduce *another Jesus* and *another spirit* into Christianity (2 Corinthians 11:3, 4).

Through deception, Satan has almost managed to destroy the foun-

dition upon which Jesus built His Church. In its infancy, Jesus said He would build it on the rock of truth that He is the Son of God (Matthew 16:16-18). Today, because of the Trinity doctrine, Christians are ostracized and disfellowshipped if they believe in the literal Sonship of Jesus.

As we saw in Chapter 4, in the last days, God's people will have the Father's name and Jesus' name written on their forehead. The apostate church will have "mystery" written on her forehead (Revelation 14:1; 17:5), which symbolizes the god they worship.

Understanding this truth has set me free from Satan's rampant deception. I pray all God's people will be set free.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36

How can you be truly set free, if you reject the Son?



Facts Worth Considering

The Bible often presents the Father and the Son as individual Beings, but never do we see the Spirit presented this way. Notice the following observations:

- Our fellowship is only with two Beings, not three (1 John 1:3).
- The council of peace was between two Beings, not three (Zechariah 6:13).
- Eternal life is the result of a relationship with two Beings, not three (John 17:3).
- Abiding in the doctrine of Christ results in receiving two Beings, not three (2 John 9).
- When John was taken in vision to heaven, he only saw two Beings, not three (Revelation 7:9, 10; 22:22, 23).
- In Revelation 4, John sees one Being sitting on the throne (Revelation 4:2, 3). The beings surrounding the throne worshiped that one Being, saying, “*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*” The 24 elders worshiped the same Being, saying, “*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*” (Revelation 8-11).

The one Being sitting on the throne had a book in His hand (Revelation 5:1); only Jesus, “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David*” (Revelation 5:5) was able to take and open this book. Now notice how the Scripture portrays it:

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.” Revelation 5:6, 7

Who is the One sitting on the throne and worshiped as God in heaven? Who is the Lamb?

While the Trinity and Tritheism introduce a different spirit by stating, “The Father is not the Son; Son is not the Spirit; Spirit is not the Father,” etc., Modalism does not do that. Since I have not dealt much with the “Oneness” theology so far in this book, I decided to write some thoughts about it in this chapter.

Modalism, “Oneness” theology, or Jesus-only belief, teaches one God: a singular, divine Spirit or Being, who manifests Himself as three modes/manifestation: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The core of this doctrine is that Jesus is the Father, and Jesus is the Spirit. One God reveals Himself in different “modes.” There is not three persons/beings; only one person/being with three manifestations.

However, when reading the Scriptures, we come across passages that do not harmonize with this belief. Here are a few:

- The work of creation has been attributed to two, not only one. In Genesis 1:26, God talking to His Son said, “*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*” This and many other passages attribute the work of creation to the Father and His Son, proving the existence of two Beings before creation. (Compare Proverbs 30:4 with 8:30. See also 1 Corinthians 8:6, Ephesians 3:9, Hebrews 1:1-3). This concept alone disproves the “Oneness”, or *Jesus-only belief* because it shows the presence of two Beings before creation. If there are two, then there cannot be only one.
- In Genesis 19:24, we read, “*Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven.*” Two Lords are mentioned in this verse. One was in heaven (the Father), and the other was on earth (the Son who came down

with two angels and spoke to Abraham in Genesis 18).

- In Psalms 110:1 we read, “*The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*” This verse obviously tells us of two Lords; one telling the other to sit on His right hand (compare with Matthew 22: 43, 44; see also Hebrew 1:13). If the Son is to sit on the right hand of the Father, how could there be only one being/person?
- In Daniel 7:9 “*I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.*” Couple of verses later he sees someone being brought before the Ancient of Days: “*I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.*” Daniel 7:13 Daniel saw the *Ancient of Days* sitting on the throne, and another Person called the *Son of man* coming before Him. This makes two Beings, not one. A similar scene is presented in Revelation 4 & 5 as we saw earlier. Both present the Father and the Son.
- In Act 2:32, 33 we read, “*This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*” Again we see two Beings, Jesus receiving the Spirit of His Father and sitting on His right hand.
- In Hebrews 1: 8, 9 we read, “*But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*” The Father calls His Son ‘God’, and Himself the ‘God of His Son’, implying two. We also read that the Father anointed the Son with the oil of gladness. For one to anoint another there needs to be two.

Only one verse in the Bible calls Jesus “*the everlasting Father*” (Isaiah 9:6). Based on this text some have concluded that Jesus is the Father. That is not what the text means. Please refer to Objection 3 in Chapter 15 where I will deal with this text.

On another note, here are some thought-provoking questions:

- The pronoun “it” is at times used in the Bible to refer to the Spirit, but never of the Father and His Son (John 1:32; Romans 8:16, 26; 1 Peter 1:11). If they are co-equal in the same way that the Trinity doctrine teaches, why use “it” for one and not the others?
- If the Trinity doctrine is correct, why not worship and pray to God the Holy Spirit? If we are meant to do so, where is the Biblical evidence to support it?
- If the Trinity doctrine is correct, why does the Bible say, after “*all things shall be subdued unto*” Him, that the Son shall “*also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*” This is referring to the Father. (1 Corinthians 15:24, 28)
- If it is true, as the Trinity teaches, that the Father is NOT the Holy Spirit and the Spirit is not the Father, then who is the Father of Jesus? Biblically speaking, it was the Holy Spirit that came upon Mary, and she was found with a child (Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:18, 20)!
- If the first-century Christians were Trinitarians, why do we read in Acts 19 about twelve disciples who were baptised by John’s baptism saying, “*We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.*” Acts 19:2.
- Why are the terms “God the Holy Spirit” and “God the Son” not mentioned in the Bible?
- Is Jesus truly the Son of God or is He not? Does His Sonship precede the incarnation or depend upon it? If it precedes it, then how is He the Son if the three are co-eternal, meaning none came before the other?
- One last fact worth considering is the shocking reality that Trinitarian theologians and Bible commentators acknowledge—while holding to the Trinity doctrine—that it is not found in the Bible. Here are some examples for your consideration from Protestant and Catholic sources:

Millard J. Erickson—(Research Professor of Theology at S.W. Baptist

Theological Seminary (Southern Baptist) in his book on the Trinity, *God in Three Persons*):

“This doctrine in many ways presents strange paradoxes ... It was the very first doctrine dealt with systematically by the church, yet is still one of the most misunderstood and disputed doctrines. Further, it is not clearly or explicitly taught anywhere in Scripture, yet it is widely regarded as a central doctrine, indispensable to the Christian faith” (p. 11-12).

Adventist Review, Vol. 158, No. 31, 1981, p. 4

“While no single scriptural passage states formally the doctrine of the Trinity, it is assumed as a fact by Bible writers and mentioned several times ... Only by faith can we accept the existence of the Trinity.”

Charles Ryrie (professor of Systematic Theology and dean of doctoral studies at Dallas Theological Seminary; also served as president and professor at what is now known as Cairn University) in his respected work *Basic Theology*, writes:

“Many doctrines are accepted by evangelicals as being clearly taught in the Scripture for which there are no proof texts. The doctrine of the Trinity furnishes the best example of this. It is fair to say that the Bible does not clearly teach the doctrine of the Trinity ... In fact, there is not even one proof text, if by proof text we mean a verse or passage that “clearly” states that there is one God who exists in three persons ... The above illustrations prove the fallacy of concluding that if something is not proof texted in the Bible we cannot clearly teach the results ... If that were so, I could never teach the doctrine of the Trinity” (1999, p. 89, 90).

Professor Shirley C. Guthrie, Jr.—(Trinitarian scholar, in his best selling book, *Christian Doctrine*):

“The Bible does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity. Neither the word “trinity” itself nor such language as ‘one-in-three,’

‘three-in-one,’ one ‘essence’ (or “substance”), and three ‘persons’ is biblical language. The language of the doctrine is the language of the ancient church taken from classical Greek philosophy” (p. 76-77).

Roger Olson and Christopher Hall—(In their book, The Trinity):

“It is understandable that the importance placed on this doctrine is perplexing to many lay Christians and students. Nowhere is it clearly and unequivocally stated in Scripture. The doctrine of the Trinity developed gradually after the completion of the N.T. in the heat of controversy. The full-blown doctrine of the Trinity was spelled out in the fourth century at two great ecumenical councils: Nicea (325 A.D.) and Constantinople (381 A.D.)” (p. 1-2).

Richard Rice (professor of Theology and Philosophy of Religion at Loma Linda University) wrote in his book The Reign of God, An Introduction to Christian Theology from a Seventh-day Adventist Perspective, 1985. Andrews University Press:

“The role of the trinity in a doctrine of God always raises questions. One reason is that the word itself does not appear in the Bible, nor is there any clear statement of the idea. But the Bible does set the stage for its formulation, and the concept represents a development of biblical claims and concepts. So even though the doctrine of the trinity is not part of what the Bible itself says about God, it is part of what the church must say to safeguard the biblical view of God. ... “We can find hints of this doctrine in the Old Testament and preliminary expressions of it in the new. ... “As these passages indicate, the idea of the trinity has precedents in the Bible, even though a full-fledged doctrine of the trinity is not to be found there.”

Professor Fernando L. Canale, wrote in the Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology, Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia, Volume 12, page 138, “Doctrine of God”:

“The concept of the Trinity, namely the idea that the three are

one, is not explicitly stated but only assumed."

The Oxford Companion to the Bible:

"Because the Trinity is such an important part of later Christian doctrine, it is striking that the term does not appear in the New Testament. Likewise, the developed concept of three coequal partners in the Godhead found in later creedal formulations cannot be clearly detected within the confines of the canon [i.e., actual Scripture]" (Bruce Metzger and Michael Coogan, editors, 1993, "Trinity," p. 782).

Harper-Collins Bible Encyclopaedia of Catholicism—(1995 Edition):

"Today, however, scholars generally agree that there is no doctrine of the Trinity as such in either the Old Testament or the New Testament ... It would go far beyond the intention and thought-forms of the Old Testament to suppose that a late-fourth century or thirteenth century Christian doctrine can be found there. Likewise, the New Testament does not contain an explicit doctrine of the Trinity."

The Mystery of the Trinity by Raoul Dederen, published in *Adventist Review*, August 26, 1993:

"Some will tend to resist this doctrine (the trinity) because it is not found expressly stated in the scriptures."

And last but not least, the challenge put forth to protestants by a Catholic scholar, *Graham Greene*:

"Our opponents sometime claim that no belief should be held dogmatically which is not explicitly stated in Scripture ... but the Protestant churches have themselves accepted such dogmas as the Trinity, for which there is no such precise authority in the Gospels." (Life Magazine, Oct. 30, 1950)

What is your foundation? On what do you, dear Reader, stand and build your doctrines? Yes, it is shocking to realize the most important

“doctrine” of Christendom is not found in the Bible. It is mind boggling to realize that what we held to and cherished as truth for over 1600 years, is the very thing that destroys the foundation on which Jesus built His church. It is not a comforting thought, to say the least.

But what is more shocking and mind boggling is that, in spite of the glaring evidence against such doctrine, and the clear Word of God pointing to the truth, many still choose to ignore the evidence, turn a blind eye to the truth, and hold onto man-made traditions and philosophies.

Through their actions, they mimic the Pharisees’ conduct and bring Jesus’ words to life when He said:

“This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do ... Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. ... Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.” Mark 7: 6-13

What will you do, dear Reader? Where will you stand?

Chapter 13



Now What?

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD ...” Malachi 4:5

Malachi’s last words, at the close of the Old Testament, refer to Elijah and his significance on those living at the brink of “*the great and dreadful day of the LORD.*”

His words are a prophecy of someone who was to come in “*the spirit and power*” of Elijah (Luke 1:17), to preach a message similar to that of Elijah. Before the first advent of Christ, this work was done by John the Baptist (Matthew 17:12,13), and before the second advent of Christ, the last book of the New Testament tells us of a similar message to Elijah’s that will be preached to the world. Here it is:

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Revelation 14:6, 7

This message is a call to worship God, the maker of heaven and earth, just like Elijah’s message was a call to worship the true God (1 Kings 18:21). Moreover, it announces the “*hour of his judgment is come,*” which is synonymous with “*the day of the Lord*” (see Isaiah 13:6).

Dear Reader, the message of the book you hold in your hands is a crucial part of Elijah's message. It is a call to worship the true God, as you have seen in the previous chapters. As God's people living before *the great and dreadful day of the Lord*, we cannot give the three angel's messages to the world, neither can we prepare the way of the Lord if we do not worship Elijah's God.

Just like in Elijah's day, God's people are in confusion about who the God of the Bible is. Through the Trinity doctrine, Satan introduced another Jesus and another spirit. He has deceived Christians into worshipping a god only found in man-made philosophies and traditions.

Trinitarianism, Tritheism, and Modalism each deny Jesus' Sonship, hence introducing a different god than the One mentioned in the Scriptures; they each introduce a God who has no Son.

The doctrine of the Bible is very clear on this topic:

- It emphatically teaches Monotheism, as we saw earlier. Eight times, we are told there is one God, all of which unmistakably refer to only one Being, the Father. (Malachi 2:10; Mark 12:32; Romans 3:30; 1 Corinthians 8:4, 6; Ephesians 4:6; 1 Timothy 2:5; James 2:19). He is the Source of all things (1 Corinthians 8:6).
- Yet, the same book and authors tell us Jesus is the Son of God. Numerous verses testify to this fact. He is the Son of God because He was begotten of God in the days of eternity before anything was created. His begetting of God is the source of His divinity, authority and equality with God. The Sonship of Jesus is the foundation on which the plan of salvation and the church is built. Attacking His divine Sonship, which the Trinitarianism, Tritheism, and Modalism do, is a direct attack on His divinity and equality with God, hence an attack on the plan of salvation and the church of God.
- Again, as we saw earlier, the Holy Spirit is the third agency through which God interacts with humanity. It is so, because it is His own Spirit coming to us through His Son, Jesus Christ. It is not just a force or influence; neither is it a different person or being than the Father and the Son; it is the very life and presence of Jesus Christ, in whom the Father abides.

When we receive the Holy Spirit, we receive both: the Father and the Son.

As in the days of Elijah, so it is today. God's people have been led into worshipping a god whom our fathers did not know; One different from the God Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Jesus, and the apostles worshiped. A god who has no son and is foreign to the Scriptures as many Trinitarian theologians, professors, and commentators have freely admitted (which was documented in the previous chapter).

Dear Reader, this topic is not like any other. It deals with the identity of the God who created and saved us. It affects our worship and our understanding of the plan of salvation.

God in His wisdom foresaw the need to send a message before the great and dreadful day of the Lord pointing His people to worship the true God, the maker of heaven and earth. His words are "*worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*" This refers to God the Father (Acts 4:24,27).

The Trinity, in all its variations, which has become Christianity's most-cherished doctrine, is a deception, leading Christians to worship a god foreign to Scriptures.

What will you do? Whom will you worship?

Elijah's words come piercing through history and are spoken to you today:

"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." 1 Kings 18:21

Will your answer mimic the Israelites reply to Elijah, or will it mimic Joshua's word:

"... as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:14, 15

"Whom do you say that I am?" Jesus' question was to the apostles and to you this day!

What is your answer?

SECTION 2

The following section is a series of Bible studies that have been put together with you in mind. They serve as additional biblical evidence to the topic discussed in this book, and as a tool enabling you to share this truth with others.

The simple format used in preparing these lessons allows anyone, with a willing heart, to teach the Godhead topic from the Bible and answer the common objections. The counsel given us is:

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
2 Timothy 2:15

This will be our motto in these lessons.

Having said this, it is important to highlight that each person needs to know this truth for themselves before they attempt teaching it. When I first learned the truth, out of excitement, I began sharing it with others. However, when they came back to me with genuine questions, I did not have answers. This came across as if I did not know what I was talking about, which of course, the enemy used to discredit the truth.

My advice to you, dear Reader, is familiarize yourself with the common objections and their answers before you attempt teaching this truth. Make the truth your own by studying and researching it for yourself. The Bible says *“The heart of the righteous studieth to answer”* Proverbs 15:28.

Last but not least, as you get involved with discussions or studies about biblical topics, especially about this topic, make sure you correctly hear and understand before responding. *“Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath”* James 1:19.

Chapter 14



Bible Studies

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LESSON 1

IS IT IMPORTANT, AND CAN WE KNOW?

1. Is God pleased when His people do not know Him?

Hosea 4:1 "Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land."

(Controversy: strife, dispute, quarrel, something against)

2. What is the whole duty of man?

Ecclesiastes 12:13 "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

3. What does it mean to "fear God?"

The Bible writers, often used a style of writing called parallelism where they would write a thought and then repeated it using different words, yet implying the same meaning.

Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Proverbs 9:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding."

Proverbs 2:5 "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God."

"fear of the Lord" = "knowledge of God"

4. What is the first message that we are to give in the last days?

Revelation 14:7 "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

(A part of the first angels message is to bring back the knowledge of God to the people.)

5. Is it important to know God?

Hosea 4:6 "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."

Hosea 6:6 "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

6. Why is knowing God so important?

John 17:3 "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

2 Peter 1:2 "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord..."

7. What does knowing God involve?

a. Know who God is

2 Timothy 1:12 "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

(Paul knew who God is, that is why he was able to declare Him to those who worshiped Him ignorantly: Act 17:23)

b. Know His ways/glory/character

Exodus 33:13 "Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people."

Exodus 33:18 "And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory."

(ways = glory)

Exodus 34:6,7 "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." God's character is here displayed as his glory.

1 John 4:7-9 "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."

(know God = love God and man, because God is love)

c. Keep His commandments

Titus 1:16 "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

Knowing God leads to obeying Him. Doctrine is not the end; it is the means to know God better, to get closer to Him.

8. What must I do to know God intimately?

Proverbs 2:35 "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding. If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God."

9. Can we know who God is? Has God revealed Himself to us in His Word?

Romans 1:20 "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse ..."

1 John 5:20 "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

10. What is the only thing we can glory in?

Jeremiah 9:23,24 "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."

LESSON 2

WHO IS THE GOD OF THE BIBLE?

1. According to the Old Testament, how many Gods are there?

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD..."

Deuteronomy 4:35 "Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him."

Jeremiah 10:10 "But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation." (see *Question 6*, on p. 102-103)

2. According to the New Testament, how many Gods are there?

1 Corinthians 8:4 "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one."

Ephesians 4:6 "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

1 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;..."

James 2:19 "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."

3. Who is the most qualified person to tell us about the true God?

John 1:18 "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

John 3:11 “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.”

4. According to Jesus—

a. Who is “the only true God”?

John 17:3 “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

b. Whom did Jesus say we should pray to?

Matthew 6:9-13 “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

c. Which is the first commandment of all?

Mark 12:28-32 “And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:”

Knowing God is required before we can love Him. A correct knowledge of God is vital for our relationship with Him. The scribe agreed that there is only one God, and none other but He.

d. Did Jesus correct the scribe?

Mark 12:34 “And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.”

(The belief of the scribe reflected the faith of the entire Jewish nation. The Jews believed in one God only.)

John 8:41 "Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God."

e. Who is the God of the Jews?

John 8:54 "Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: ..." (see Romans 3:29)

f. Who will the true worshippers worship?

John 4:21-23 "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him."

5. According to the apostles, who is the one God?

1 Corinthians 8:6 "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

James 3:9 "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God."

Romans 15:6 "That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 4:6 "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

2 Corinthians 1:3 "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;..."

6. Who is the living and true God?

1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10 "For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from

idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

LESSON 3

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD THE FATHER

What does the Bible have to say about the sovereignty of the Father? Here are some facts about God the Father that will shed some light on this topic.

1. The Father is the ultimate Source of all things.

1 Corinthians 8:6 "But to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

2 Corinthians 5:18 "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;..."

Romans 11:36 "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Ephesians 3:14,15 "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,..."

2. The Father is the God of Christ.

a. During the Incarnation

Matthew 27:46 "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

b. After His Resurrection

John 20:17 "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

Ephesians 1:3 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: ..."

Revelation 3:12 "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

(see Hebrews 1:9, 1 Peter 1:3)

3. The Father is exclusively called the Most High ...

Compare the following two verses:

Psalms 78:17 "And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness."

Isaiah 63:8-10 "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them."

God the Father is the subject of these verses. Two Beings are mentioned, God the Father (who is called "their Saviour") and Christ (who is called "the angel of his presence").

... While Jesus is called the "Son of the Most High."

Mark 5:7 "And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not."

Luke 8:28 "When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not."

The above verses clearly distinguish between the Father and the Son. The Father is called "the Most High," while Jesus is called the "Son of the most high God."

4. The Father is older than Jesus.

John 14:28 "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."

The word "greater" in the above text comes from (G3187 "μείζων" meizon) which can mean "older" as translated in Romans 9:12, "It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger."

5. The Father is greater than all.

John 10:29 "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

6. The Father is the head of Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:3 "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

7. The Father is above all.

Ephesians 4:4-6 "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

8. The Father is the Lord of heaven and earth.

Matthew 11:25 "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (See Luke 10:21)

Not only that, but the Bible also reveals to us some things which Jesus received from His Father which sheds a bit more light on the sovereignty of God the Father.

9. What did Jesus receive from His Father?

a. His life

John 5:26 "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;..."

b. His power and authority

Matthew 28:18 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (see Matthew 11:27; John 5:22-27; 17:2)

c. His kingdom

Daniel 7:14 "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Luke 1:32 "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: ..." (see also 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:22)

d. His right to receive worship

John 5:22 "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." (see Acts 2:36; Philippians 2:9-10; Hebrews 1:6)

e. His name

Philippians 2:9 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;..."

Hebrews 1:4 "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

f. All things

John 3:35 "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; ..." (see Hebrews 1:2)

The above verses are ample evidence to prove to us the sovereignty of God the Father. But, by this, we do not diminish the position, value or divinity of Jesus, the Son of God. (For further information on the equality of the Father and the Son, please refer to *Lesson 5*.)

LESSON 4

WHO IS JESUS?

1. Who did Jesus claim to be?

John 10:36 “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?”

2. What did God the Father say regarding the identity of Jesus?

Matthew 3:16, 17 “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Matthew 17:5 “While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”

3. Who did the disciples understand Jesus to be?

Matthew 16:15, 16 “He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

John 11:27 “She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.”

Matthew 14:33 “Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.”

Acts 9:20 "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."

4. Did the fallen angels know that Jesus was the Son of God?

Luke 4:3 "And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread."

Luke 8:28 "When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not."

Mark 5:7 "And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not."

Satan and the fallen angels knew before their fall that Jesus was the Son of God, hence Satan's challenge in the wilderness and the demon's confession.

5. Who else is referred to as the "son of God" in the Scriptures?

Luke 3:38 "Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God."

Adam was the son of God by creation (Genesis 5:1), as also were the angels (Job 38:7).

1 John 3:1 "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

We are sons of God by adoption (Romans 8:15).

6. How is Christ the Son of God?

1 John 4:9 "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."

Jesus is not a son by creation, as Adam was; nor a son by adoption, like us; but He is the only begotten Son; He is the Son because He was begotten of the Father.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

God giving His only begotten Son indicates that God must have had a Son, before the Incarnation, to give.

7. When did Jesus become the Son of man?

Galatians 4:4 "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

Luke 1:31 "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."

Jesus became the Son of man when He was brought forth of Mary; at the Incarnation.

8. When was Christ begotten of the Father?

Micah 5:2 "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

"Goings forth" also means "origin." Jesus was brought forth in the days of antiquity, or from everlasting (margin: the days of eternity).

9. What happened in the days of eternity?

Proverbs 8:22-30 "The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of

the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

In the above passage, speaking under the title of wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Colossians 2:3), Jesus points the reader to the duration, before the creation of anything, as the time when He was "brought forth" or "possessed" by the Father.

10. Was Jesus referred to as the 'Son of God' before Bethlehem?

Proverbs 30:4 "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?"

Daniel 3:25 "He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Psalms 2:12 "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

11. During the Incarnation, did Jesus teach that He came forth from the Father?

John 8:42 "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me."

John 16:27 "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God."

12. Is it important for us to believe that Jesus is the real and literal Son of God?

1 John 2:22, 23 "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also."

1 John 5:10, 11 *“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.”*

John 3:36 *“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”*

John 20:31 *“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”*

13. Why did the Jews kill Christ?

Matthew 26:63-65 *“But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.”*

John 19:7 *“The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.”*

Jesus preferred to die than to deny His true Sonship! How much more should we mere mortals confess the Sonship of Jesus?

14. What is promised to those who receive Jesus as the Son of God?

John 1:12 *“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”*

LESSON 5

EQUALITY OF THE FATHER AND THE SON

We have established that Jesus is the Son of God because He was begotten/brought forth from the Father in the days of eternity.

1. Are the Father and the Son equal?

Philippians 2:6 "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:..."

In this lesson we will search the Scriptures to see if God reveals to us the basis of this equality. Why are the Father and the Son equal?

2. What did Jesus inherit by virtue of His divine Birth?

Hebrews 1:4 "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

Exodus 23:20, 21 "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him."

Jesus, as the Son of God, inherited His Father's name. We also know that Jesus, who was the Angel that went before the Israelites, had the Father's name back then. Hence, we conclude that Jesus inherited the Father's name before Bethlehem, which means that Jesus' Sonship predates the Incarnation.

3. What does "name" mean?

Nature: "Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." **Genesis 5:2**

Authority: *“I am come in my Father’s name.”* **John 5:43** (see John 10:25; Matthew 21:23)

Character: *“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.”* **Proverbs 22:1** (see Ecclesiastes 7:1; Proverbs 15:30)

By inheriting the Father’s name, Jesus inherited the Father’s God-nature or divine nature.

4. What does this fact make Christ?

Hebrews 1:1-3 “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Christ is the express image of the Father. He has the same divine nature and life as His Father has. His sonship and inheritance qualified Jesus to be:

- a. **Owner**—*“heir of all things”*
- b. **Creator**—*“by whom also he made the worlds”*
- c. **Image of and equal with God**—*“the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person”*
- d. **Sustainer**—*“upholding all things”*
- e. **Saviour**—*“himself purged our sins”*
- f. **Mediator**—*“sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high”*

5. Does the Bible reveal to us that Christ was the image of God before the Incarnation?

Revelation 12:7 “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.”

“Michael” means “one who is like God.” Again this confirms the fact that Jesus inherited this name in the days of eternity.

6. What else did Christ inherit?

John 5:26 "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."

The very same life that the Father has, was given to His Son by inheritance. This is immortal, original life that the Son can give to those who believe (John 17:2).

7. Does this make Jesus, a divine Being, worthy of our praise and worship?

Hebrews 1:8, 6 "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."

Colossians 2:9; 1:19 "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."

The fullness of the Godhead, or divinity, dwells in the Son. He is fully divine because His Father is God.

8. Should we honor the Son as we honor the Father?

John 5:23 "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."

We honor and worship the Son as much as the Father. They are both of the same divine nature. We pay supreme honor to God when we honor and reverence His Son (Philippians 2:11).

9. Did the Jews understand that Jesus claimed equality with the Father?

John 5:18 "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."

10. Why did the Jews want to stone Jesus?

John 10:33-36 “The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?”

By claiming to be the Son of God, the Jews understood Jesus to mean that He is equal with God. Jesus also understood that. Jesus' equality with the Father is based on His Sonship.

LESSON 6

HOLY SPIRIT—PART 1: GOD'S SPIRIT/MAN'S SPIRIT

1. In what image was man made?

Genesis 1:26 “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:...”

2. Who was God talking to? Is there another divine Being in the image of God?

The Bible describes Christ as the only divine being in God's image.

2 Corinthians 4:4 “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

Philippians 2:6 “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:...”

Colossians 1:15 “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:...”

Hebrews 1:4 “Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”

Unless the Bible reveals to us another divine Being in the image and likeness of God, we must conclude that, in Genesis 1:26, God the Father was talking to His Son.

3. What does the term “image” and “likeness” entail?

Genesis 5:3 “And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth”

We see here that Seth was in the likeness and image of Adam. That includes physical and spiritual aspect.

4. What is man (living soul) made of?

Genesis 2:7 "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

human body + human spirit = living human being

5. If man was made in the image of God, and man has two aspects, a spirit and a body, does that mean that God and Christ have a spirit and a bodily form?

a. Does God have a bodily form?

- Prophets saw God:

- *Micaiah*

1 Kings 22:19 "And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left."

- *Isaiah*

Isaiah 6:1 "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple."

(Also Daniel [*Daniel 7:9, 13*] and John [*Revelation 4:2, 3*] saw God)

- Christ was in the form of God before the Incarnation:
Philippians 2:6 "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:..."
- Jesus said that His Father has a form which no man has seen:
John 6:46 "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father." (see also John 5:37)
- We will see God:
Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

b. Does God have a spirit?

Father:

John 4:24 "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (see also Matthew 10:20)

Jesus:

1 Corinthians 15:45 "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." (see also Philippians 1:19)

Divine Body/Form + Divine Spirit = Divine Being

6. Are there any parallels between "man and his spirit" and "God and His spirit?"

1 Corinthians 2:11 "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

("even so" means "in like manner")

The above text tells us that "what man's spirit is to man" is the same as "what God's spirit is to God." Yet the text marks out a very important difference. While the spirit of man is "in him," the spirit of God is not limited to the bodily form of God.

7. What does the spirit of man refer to?

- **Mind**—*Daniel 2:1* "And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him."

(Obviously Nebuchadnezzar could not sleep because he was thinking of the dream he had. In other words, his mind was troubled.)

- **Heart**—*Psalms 34:18* "The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (see also Psalms 51:10, 17; 77:6; 78:8; Ezekiel 36:26)
- **Life/breath**—*Job 27:3* "All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils;..." (Isaiah 38:16; see also Job 27:3; Revelation 11:11)

The spirit of man is the personality, character and life of the man. It is one's own person.

8. How does the Bible explain God's Spirit?

- **Mind**—compare Isaiah 40:13 with Paul's quote in Romans 11:34.

Isaiah 40:13 "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?"

Romans 11:34 "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (see also 1 Corinthians 2:16)

- **Life**—

John 6:63 "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

Romans 8:10 "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (see also Genesis 2:7; Job 27:3; 33:4; Revelation 11:11)

Just like the relation between man and his spirit, so is the relation between God and His spirit. The spirit of God is His own personality, character, life and thoughts.

9. If the spirit of man is none other than his own presence/person, then can we say that the spirit of God is His own presence?

Psalms 139:7 "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?"

Psalms 51:11 "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."

Conclusion: God has a bodily form and has a spiritual presence. His spirit is not limited to His body. In the same way that your spirit is your own person, mind, and presence so is God's spirit His own person, mind, presence.

LESSON 7

HOLY SPIRIT – PART 2: IDENTITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the previous lesson we established that God's spirit is His own mind, life, presence and person. In this lesson we want to see where the Spirit proceeds from and the identity of the Spirit.

1. What did Jesus promise before He left?

John 14:16, 17, 26 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. ... But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

2. According to the Bible, whose spirit is the "Holy Spirit?"

Compare the following two verses:

Mark 13:11 "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."

Matthew records it as follows:

Matthew 10:19, 20 "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

Holy Spirit = Spirit of the Father

Also compare the following two verses:

2 Peter 1:21 "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

While in his first letter talking about the same thing, Peter says:

1 Peter 1:10,11 "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

Holy Spirit = Spirit of Christ

According to the previous four verses, we can safely conclude:

Spirit of Christ = Holy Spirit = Spirit of your Father

3. How many holy spirits are there?

Ephesians 4:4 "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." (See also 1 Corinthians 6:17; 12:13; Ephesians 2:18)

4. When we receive the Holy Spirit who do we receive?

John 14:23 "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

According to Jesus, when we receive the Holy Spirit, we receive both, the Father and the Son.

5. Do the Father and the Son possess the same Spirit/life?

Romans 8:9, 10 "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

In this verse, while talking about the same spirit, Paul uses the following terminologies: Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ,

Christ. This tells us Paul believed that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit/Life of both, the Father and the Son.

6. Where does the Spirit come from?

John 15:26 "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:..."

7. Why does the Spirit proceed from the Father?

1 Corinthians 8:6 "But to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

Romans 11:36 "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

The Spirit (life of God) proceeds from the Father, because all things are of Him. He is the source of all things. (Please see *Lesson 3* for further information.)

8. Through whom does this spirit come to us?

Ephesians 2:18 "For through him [Jesus] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

John 20:22 "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:..."

The Spirit of the Father comes to us through Jesus, and through Him, it returns.

9. Who comes to us to be our Comforter?

John 14:18, 19 "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also."

10. How does the Father send Jesus to us? Is it Jesus in flesh or in Spirit?

Galatians 4:6 "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Note: Paul tells us in Galatians that when we receive the Spirit of Jesus, we cry “*Abba Father.*” Yet, he also tells us in Romans 8:15 that when we receive the Spirit we cry “*Abba, Father.*” This is another confirmation that the Holy Spirit is none other than the spirit of Jesus. Also compare Galatians 4:6 with Acts 3:26

11. When we receive the Spirit of Jesus, is that someone different to Christ?

2 Corinthians 3:17 “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

Paul told us, in 1 Corinthians 8:6, that there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, and in Ephesians 4:4, that there is one spirit. Yet Paul tells us in the above verse, that “*the Lord is that Spirit.*” If the Lord is Jesus and there is one spirit, then it is only logical and scriptural to believe that the Holy Spirit is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ in spirit form. Jesus Himself comes to us as a personal Comforter. The Spirit is the person of Jesus.

12. Does the Bible tell us that Jesus became a spirit?

1 Corinthians 15:45 “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.”

13. Why does the Bible sometimes say that when the Comforter comes both the Father and the Son will come, while in other places it says Jesus is that Spirit?

2 Corinthians 5:19 “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,...”

John 14:10, 20 “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”

14. Who is it that knocks on the door of our heart?

Revelation 3:20 “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

15. What is the hope of Glory?

Colossians 1:27 "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:..."

LESSON 8

THE FATHER AND SON IN THE SANCTUARY

1. Where can we look to study and learn more about God's way?

The Bible tells us that God's way is in the sanctuary:

Psalms 77:13 "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?"

What does the sanctuary have to say about the Godhead? How many Beings does the sanctuary and its services reveal to us?

2. How many stages does the sanctuary service entail?

The sanctuary service entailed three stages the courtyard, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. We will look at the three stages independently to see what we can learn from them.

I. The Most Holy Place:

- a. What lessons can we learn from the Most Holy Place in regards to the Godhead?

God gave strict instructions that only one being, other than Himself, is allowed to enter the Holy of Holies.

1. **Jesus, our High Priest:** Only the high priest was allowed to enter into the Most Holy Place (Hebrews 9:6, 7). Jesus is our heavenly High Priest (Hebrews 4:14; 5:10; 6:20).
2. **God the Father on the throne:** God's presence dwelt on top of the mercy seat -(Exodus 25:21, 22; Psalms

80:1). God the Father is the One sitting on the throne in the heavenly sanctuary (Revelation 4:2; 5:1-6).

3. ***Jesus presents our prayers to the Father:*** Only one being, the high priest, was able to take the incense in before the presence of God on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:11-13). The incense represents the prayers of the saints mingled with Christ's righteousness (Psalms 141:2, Revelation 5:8; 8:3). It is Christ who receives our prayers and presents them to His Father mingled with His merit and righteousness.

- b. How many divine Beings does the Most Holy Place present us with? And who are They?

A simple study of the Most Holy Place in the earthly sanctuary presents us with only two divine Beings, the Father and the Son, represented by the earthly high priest and God's presence on the throne.

II. The Holy Place:

- a. What lessons can we learn from the earthly Holy Place in regards to the Godhead?

1. ***Jesus is our heavenly Priest/High Priest:*** The priests or the high priest who officiated in the first apartment is a symbol or type of Christ, our High Priest.
2. ***God's presence in the Holy Place:*** The Bible also tells us that in the earthly sanctuary God manifested His glory in both apartments.

Exodus 33:9-11 "And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses. And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door. And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle." (See also Exodus 29:42-44; 30:36; 40:34, 35; 1Kings 8:10, 11; 2 Chronicles 5:13, 14; 7:1, 2.)

In Exodus 33:9-11, we have the example of the presence of two living beings—Moses, the Mediator, and God. Of course we know that Moses represents Jesus, the only Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5). Hence, this example points forward to the presence of both—Jesus, our Mediator and High Priest, and God the Father in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary.

3. **Table of Showbread:** The Table of Showbread had two rows of bread on it, six in each row (Leviticus 24: 5, 6). These two rows represented the Father and the Son; here is why:

- **Two Crowns:** The Table of Showbread had two crowns or a double crown on it (Exodus 25:23-25). Why two?
- **Jesus is the Bread:** The bread represents Jesus (John 6:51). But Jesus said “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). Hence, the bread could represent the Father as well. That is why God instructed the priest to place the bread in two stacks (not 1 or 3), representing the Father and the Son, on a table, which had two crowns (not 1 or 3).
- **Jesus shares the Father’s throne:** Revelation 3:21 tells us that Jesus shares His Father’s throne; hence, there are two divine Beings on the throne.
- The Table of Shewbread with the two stacks on it is a fit representation of the Father and Son’s presence in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary in which Jesus fulfilled His ministration in the Holy Place.

b. How many divine Beings does the earthly Holy Place present us with? And Who are They?

A study of the earthly Holy Place proves the presence of only two Beings: Jesus, the Mediator/Priest, and God the Father. Again only two living Beings, not three.

- c. What about the Holy Spirit? Is it present in the Holy Place?

In the Holy Place there are impersonal and inanimate elements that represent the Holy Spirit, such as the oil used to light the candle stick. But the point is, that nowhere do we see a third living being representing the Holy Spirit. The spirit is there, yes, but not bodily like the Father and the Son. The oil is a symbol of the spirit, yet the oil is used in the Holy Place to produce light, which is a symbol of Jesus (John 8:12, 9:5).

II. The courtyard:

- a. What lessons can we learn from the courtyard in regards to the Godhead?

The service in the courtyard involved three living beings:

1. ***Jesus is the Sacrifice:*** The sacrifice, whether a lamb or a bullock, etc. (Leviticus 4:3), represented Jesus, the Son of God (John 1:26, 39).
2. ***We are the sinners:*** The sinner, who slew the sacrifice with his own hands (Leviticus 4:4) represented the sinner who confesses his sins and offers up spiritual sacrifices (1Peter 2:5).
3. ***Jesus is the anointed Priest:*** The anointed priest took the blood into the sanctuary (Leviticus 4:5). This also represents Jesus, our High Priest. (Hebrews 4:14; 5:10; 6:20)

- b. How many divine Beings does the courtyard service present us with?

These were the only living beings that were involved in the courtyard service. We only see one divine Being.

- c. What do the other priests represent?

Of course, more than one priest officiated in the courtyard as well as in the Holy Place. These priests can represent one of two options:

1. a type of Christ

2. all the saints (The Bible calls the followers of Jesus a “royal priesthood” (1Peter 2:9). They represent the people working in cooperation with Divinity.)

Regardless which one you believe to be the correct one, the point still stands, there is no living being representing the Holy Spirit.

- d. What about the Holy Spirit, is it represented in the courtyard?

Again we see in the courtyard some representations of the Holy Spirit, but they are impersonal and inanimate unlike the representations for Jesus. For example:

1. fire on the altar of burnt offering—In Acts 2:3, we see the Spirit poured out in the appearance of cloven tongues of fire.
2. water in the laver—In the New Testament, water has been used to represent the Spirit (see John 4:14; 7:38, 39; Revelation 22:1).

But the point still stands, nowhere do we see the Spirit represented as a living being like the Father and the Son.

- e. What is one of the roles of the high priest in the courtyard that relates to Jesus’ work on Earth?

It is important to note that one of the roles or duties of the high priest was to teach the people (Ezekiel 44:23), which of course took place outside the tabernacle since none other than the priests could enter therein. In other words, the priest was not only to minister in the sanctuary before God, he was also to go out and teach the people.

The fascinating thing is that the priests were to change their garments before going out to the people. They had to put on a different garment (or outfit) than the one they wore in the presence of God.

Ezekiel 44:19 “And when they go forth into the utter court, even into the utter court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments.”

It is here where I believe the type gives us a very interesting and illuminating insight. One of the duties of Christ, our High Priest, is to teach the people outside the sanctuary. Not only that, but according to the type, He is to wear a different outfit, or He is to appear in “another form,” different than while in the presence of God.

And that is exactly what Christ is doing. While Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above in His physical or bodily form, He is still—by His Spirit—the minister of the church on Earth. (Galatians 4:6). Jesus Has promised to be with us always, and never leave us or forsake us (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5). The Bible tells us that Jesus was with His followers “*working with them*” (Mark 16:20).

As you can see, the earthly sanctuary presents us with only two divine Beings: the Father and the Son. There is no room for a third living being in the sanctuary. In addition to that, the sanctuary service teaches us that to fulfil the type, Jesus has to do what the priest did, namely: go out and teach the people, which He does through His own spirit, the Holy Spirit. The apostles understood that, hence Paul’s declaration that Jesus is the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17, 1 Corinthians 8:6; also please refer to *Lesson 7* for further information.)

Chapter 15



Answers to Objections

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1. OBJECTION 1—GENESIS 1:2

Genesis 1:2 “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

Objection:

The Holy Spirit was present at creation; therefore he must be an individual person like the Father and the Son.

Answer:

Creation has been attributed to the Holy Spirit, as much as to the Father and the Son, due to the above text. But what the readers sometimes fail to acknowledge is the possessive terminology used in the above verse. In this verse the possessive is used: “The Spirit of God.” It does not say, “God, the Spirit.”

Psalms 33:6 “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”

The Hebrew word for “breath” is “רוּחַ, rûach” which is the same word translated “spirit” in Genesis 1:2. The meaning should be clear: the spirit of God is the breath of God. This is confirmed further by Jesus in John 20:22 “And when he had said this, he *breathed* on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Jesus breathed His own Spirit, not someone else. It is this same spirit that is mentioned in Genesis 1:2, “the Spirit of God,” which can also be translated “breath of God.”

Job 33:4 “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.”

The Spirit of God is equated with His breath. That is what the word means.

2. OBJECTION 2—GENESIS 1:26

Genesis 1:26 “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea,

and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

Objection:

This text (as well as Genesis 11:7) proves that God is a plurality of three persons, because "us" is referring to all three.

Answer:

It is true the "us" means that there was more than one person in creation, but not necessarily three. It could simply be referring to two rather than three. The Scripture says, "*God . . . created all things by Jesus Christ*" (Ephesians 3:9). It should be obvious that "God" in this verse is someone other than Jesus Christ. And according to Hebrews 1:2, God the Father created all things by his Son.

Furthermore, in Proverbs 30:4 we read: "*Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?*"

This verse attributes the work of creation to two Beings (a Father and a Son). Proverbs 8:22-30 also attributes the work of creation to two Beings. God the Father is the great Source of all, and He created all things by His Son, Jesus Christ. As you can see, both the Old and the New Testament attribute the work of creation to only two Beings.

Moreover, God said "*let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*" Obviously God was speaking to someone in His own image and likeness. According to the Bible, Christ is the only One who is "the express image" of the Father (Hebrews 1:3, also see question 2 in *Lesson 6*).

Now we can know for a certainty who is speaking in Genesis 1:26. God the Father said to his Son, "*let us make man in our image.*"

3. OBJECTION 3—ISAIAH 9:6

Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Objection:

This passage proves the Trinity because Christ is called the “mighty God” and the “everlasting Father!”

Answer:

Much stress is laid on Isaiah 9:6, as proving a Trinity because Christ is called the everlasting Father. But it can have no reference to a Trinity. Is Christ the Father in the Trinity? If so, how is He the Son? Or if He is both Father and Son, how can there be a Trinity? For a Trinity is three persons. To recognize a Trinity, the distinction between the Father and Son must be preserved. Christ is called “the second person in the Trinity,” but if this text proves a Trinity, or refers to it at all, it proves that Christ is not the second, but the first. And if He is the first, who is the second? It is very plain that this text has no reference to such a doctrine. And, as we compare Scripture with Scripture, we can be sure that it does not support the “Jesus only” doctrine¹.

The Son is referred to as the everlasting Father, not of Himself, nor of His Father, but of the children which His Father has given Him. His language is “*I and the children which God hath given me.*” (Hebrews 2:13). Paul is quoting Isaiah 8:18 and applies it to Christ. Notice what Jesus said: “*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*” *John 6:44.*

He is our father in that He is the second Adam. Just like the first Adam is the father of the human race, the second Adam, Jesus, is the everlasting Father of the redeemed human race. Also notice

¹ “Jesus only” doctrine teaches the indivisible oneness of God where there is one God Who manifests Himself differently in different dispensations. In the Old Testament, He is the Father, in the New Testament He is Jesus, and after Jesus went back to heaven, He is the Holy Spirit.

the prophecy said “*his name shall be called.*” It was a prophecy of what was to happen in the future, at the time when “*unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.*”

Notice also that Isaiah 9:6 says that “*his name shall be called ... the mighty God.*” This term emphasizes the divine nature of Christ. He is indeed mighty, for all power is given unto Him (Matthew 28:18), and He is divine by virtue of His divine birth as we saw in *Lessons 4 & 5*. It is therefore appropriate to refer to the Son as mighty, for He is powerful. It is also appropriate to refer to Him as God, for the Most High God Himself refers to His Son as “God” in Hebrews 1:8. Therefore, the terms “everlasting Father” and “the mighty God” can rightly apply to the Son.

4. OBJECTION 4 —ISAIAH 44:6

Isaiah 44:6 “Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”

Objection:

This verse only talks about one Lord, and it says “beside me there is no God.” This must mean that this one Lord includes the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, because they are all God. And if it doesn’t, then this text precludes Jesus from being God.

Answer:

If you read Isaiah, you will notice (from Chapter 40 onwards) a new style/section begins. In every chapter, from 41-46, we find verses stating a similar point to the one highlighted in the above verse. However, that is not all that we find. We also find:

1. God highlighting that He is above men (Isaiah 41: 2-4).
2. God challenging the idol-worshippers and their idols (Isaiah 41: 21-24).

What God is saying through Isaiah is not relating to the relationship between the Father and His Son as Trinitarians would like, rather it is highlighting or relating to the relationship between the God of Heaven and the false gods on earth—whether it be men making themselves as important as God, or idols being worshiped. A good verse that shows this is **Isaiah 42:8**:

“I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.”

Notice how the term “another” is paralleled with the term “graven images.” God was saying He would not share His glory with graven images.

Now having said this, notice how Christ is mentioned in these chapters even though they highlight the one Lord aspect:

Isaiah 42:1 *“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”*

This verse is sandwiched between the following verses:

Isaiah 41:4 *“... I, the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.”* (almost exact wording as Isaiah 44:6)

Isaiah 42:8 *“I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.”*

Contextually speaking, it is very clear that Christ (my Servant) is mentioned as a separate being/person than the One who said *“I am the LORD; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another.”*

I would like to put the question back to the questioner, Who is *“the LORD the King of Israel”* and who is His *“Servant?”* It is rather obvious that one is referring to the Father while the other to Christ.

5. OBJECTION 5—MATTHEW 12:31, 32

Mathew 12:31, 32 *“Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever spea-*

keth a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

Objection:

Aren't you, by denying the Trinity and the belief that the Holy Spirit is a third, divine Being, blaspheming against the Holy Spirit and hence committing the unpardonable sin?

Answer:

This verse is often misunderstood and misapplied to mean that the unpardonable sin is rejecting the person of the Holy Spirit. But is this the correct interpretation? What does "*blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*" actually mean?

The context of Jesus' speech must not be overlooked. Let us read the passage in its setting:

Matthew 12:25-31 "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."

The parallel story is found in the gospel of Mark. This sheds further light on this question:

Mark 3:28-30 "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."

In Mark 3:30, we read the reason Jesus pointed the people to: the unpardonable sin was “*Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.*” After healing the blind and deaf, the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out devils by the power of Beelzebub (Matthew 12:24). In reply to their accusation Jesus said:

“All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.”

What does accusing Jesus of performing miracles by the power of Beelzebub have to do with rejecting the Holy Spirit? What moved Jesus to say what He said?

It is clear that the sin against the Holy Spirit is committed when one knowingly and deliberately attributes the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan. When there is a determined and persistent resistance to truth and evidence, then one is sinning against the Holy Spirit. The unpardonable sin is not rejecting the person of the Holy Spirit, for that was not the topic according to the context, rather it is rejecting light and refusing to repent and heed the promptings of God’s Spirit. By continually rejecting to repent and to accept the light that God has shown our way, we are blocking God’s avenue to reach us. By placing ourselves where we cannot be reached by God, we commit the unpardonable sin in that we leave no way for God to reach us.

6. OBJECTION 6—MATTHEW 3:16, 17

Matthew 3:16, 17 “*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*”

Objection:

In the baptism of Christ we see the Father speaking from heaven, Christ is on earth and the Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove. Does this not prove plainly the presence of three different persons, or the Trinity?

Answer:

The answer to this is very simple. If we do not add to the Scripture, we will not be confused. Here is the account as recorded by the four gospels:

Matthew 3:16 *“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.”*

Mark 1:10 *“And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.”*

Luke 3:21, 22 *“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”*

John 1:32 *“And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.”*

Some few facts we learn from these accounts are:

- a. It is the Spirit of God. It was the Spirit of someone, namely God.
- b. Its *descent* was like a dove.
- c. Its *shape* was like a dove.
- d. It's called an “*it*” by John.

Do these facts support the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is a different person separate to God? John certainly would not have used “it” to refer to a divine Being. The Holy Spirit is actually possessed by God (it is the Spirit of God).

What happened at the baptism was a direct fulfilment of what God prophesied through Isaiah:

Isaiah 61:1 *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;...”*

Jesus quoted these words after the wilderness experience (Luke 4:18). They were a direct fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament regarding the descent of the Spirit:

Isaiah 11:2 “And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;...”

Isaiah 42:1 “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”

To any honest reader it is a very simple and plain fact. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit *of the Lord*, it is His own Spirit and not someone else, called “the Spirit of the Lord.” Many people falsely believe that the “Spirit of the Lord,” “Spirit of God,” “Holy Spirit,” “Holy Ghost,” etc. are proper names. They are not. They actually describe whose Spirit it is, and what kind of Spirit it is. It belongs to the LORD and it is holy because it belongs to someone holy.

That is why Jesus was able to say:

John 10:37, 38 “If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, **that the Father is in me, and I in him.**”

How was the Father in Christ?

The answer is found in all the verses mentioned above. The Father was in Jesus, by His Spirit. And it is thus that Jesus will be in us (John 14:20), by His Spirit.

7. OBJECTION 7—MATTHEW 28:19

Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:...”

Objection:

Why did Jesus instruct us to baptize in “*the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*” if the Trinity is wrong? Doesn’t this verse prove that there are three persons in the Godhead?

Answer:

Before we answer the above verse, let us pose some questions for the reader's contemplation:

- Was Jesus addressing the identity of God in that verse or discourse?
- Does the verse, or even the chapter, mention the word "God?"
- Does the verse tell us that God is made of three beings or persons?
- Does the verse tell us anything about the nature of the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit?
- Does the verse tell us who the Holy Spirit is?
- Does the verse tell us that there are three names?

The honest answer to the above questions is "no." The verse is not dealing with who God is and does not tell us the nature of the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit. Yet it does confirm for us that there is a Father, there is a Son, and there is a Spirit. There is no doubt about the existence of any of them.

The relationship between Father, and Son, and Spirit is not defined in this text. To insist that it means there are three persons in the Godhead goes beyond the information provided in the passage. To define the relationship as three, co-equal, co-eternal beings cannot be proved from this passage.

What *does* the passage mean? How was it understood by those who heard Christ giving that instruction? The answer is easily found when we study the book of Acts. We find that all the baptisms recorded there were performed in the name of Jesus and not in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5).

This begs the question: Did the disciples misunderstand the command of Jesus? Were they wrong in baptizing people in the name of the Lord only? We do not believe so. We believe that the disciples had a better understanding of Jesus' command than many do today. The reason they saw no difference between baptizing in the name of the Lord or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is as follows:

The word "name" means "authority" (John 5:43). When we are baptized, we come under the authority and power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The use of the singular "name" con-

firmly this fact. We are now professing to be stamped with the authority and character of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

Jesus was given all power in heaven and in earth (Matt 28:18; John 5:27; John 5:43). He has the authority of the Father, has the authority of the Son (Himself), and with the correct understanding of the Holy Spirit (that it is His own spirit and person, Christ Himself and not someone else), He has the authority of the Holy Spirit. Christ has this authority by virtue of His relation to the Father (being His only begotten Son). This is His divine inheritance (Hebrews 1:4).

Therefore, since Jesus has the authority of the Father (His Father), the Son (Himself), and the Holy Spirit (His own spirit), the baptisms recorded in the book of Acts (in the name of the Lord or in the authority of the Lord) are a recognition of the authority of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the highest authority in heaven and earth. Christ is the only medium whereby we can come under that authority (John 14:6).

8. OBJECTION 8 — JOHN 1:1

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Objection:

This is one of the clearest texts proving a Trinity. The text plainly says that Jesus, the Word, is God Himself.

Answer:

This text is much misunderstood and has been misused to support a teaching that totally opposes what the text actually says. Let us examine the text briefly in the original Greek:

en 1722 arch 746 hn 2258 o 3588 logov 3056 kai 2532
In beginning was the Word and

o 3588 logov 3056 hn 2258 prov 4314 ton 3588 **yeon 2316**
the Word was with the God

kai 2532 **yeov** 2316 hn 2258 o 3588 logov 3056
and **God** *was* *the* *Word*

A closer look at the original text tells us the two words translated as “God” in that text are not identical. The first one is a *noun* (Yeon), referring to the Father, hence in Greek it is written “*the* God”. While the other (Yeov), is what in the Greek language known as, an Anarthrous Pre-Verbal Predicate Nominative. This simply means the Word is *qualitatively* God.

The Word is not *the* God, and the Word is not *a* god, but the Word is *qualitatively* God. In other words, the Word has certain qualities or attributes of God. It is for this reason that many translations render the verse in a way that recognizes this fact. For example:

- James Moffatt, “... *and the Word was divine.*”
- Today’s English Version reads: “... *and he was the same as God.*”
- The Revised English Bible reads: “... *and what God was, the Word was.*”

As you can see, different translations give it a meaning in harmony with the original. Thus what this text is telling us is that the Word, Christ, is *divine* just like the Father, possessing the “God-nature.” It does *not* tell us that Christ is God the Father, one and the same person. (Please see *Lesson 5* “Equality of the Father and the Son” for further information.)

9. OBJECTION 9—JOHN 14:16

John 14:16 “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;...”

Objection:

Didn’t Jesus teach plainly that the Holy Spirit is a different being to Himself when He promised to send us “another Comforter?”

Answer:

What *did* Christ mean when He said “another Comforter?” Was He talking about someone different to Himself?

Jesus explains what He meant just two verses later. He says plainly “*I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*” John 14:18. This “*other Comforter*” is none other than Christ Himself in *another* form (Spirit form). He is not seen (physically), as He was when He was here on Earth. This is exactly what He said. Notice: “*Yet a little while, and **the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.***” v. 19. He is removed from the eye of sense, but He is still with us in Spirit. That is what He said three verses later, “*I will love him and will **manifest myself to him***” v. 21.

The Bible confirms this conclusion (that the Lord Jesus is that Spirit, not someone else) when it tells us “*Now **the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.***” 2 Corinthians 3:17.

How did the disciples understand the term “*another Comforter*”? Did they understand that Christ was talking about someone else? Let them answer:

John 14:22 “*Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, **how** is it that thou wilt manifest **thyself** unto us, and not unto the world?*”

Very plain! Judas clearly understood that it was Christ who will come to them, not someone else. Notice his question is not “*Who?*” but it is “*How?*” Judas was not wondering who will come to them as another Comforter, but he did wonder how Christ was coming back to them. Notice the terminology Judas used: “*thou*” and “*thyself*” regarding Christ, not someone else. That is clear enough. It is not a strange thing for our Lord to come in another form. He demonstrated that on the way to Emmaus: “*After that he appeared **in another form** unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.*” Mark 16:12. This was illustrated for us in the Sanctuary service by the high priest changing his garment when going outside to teach the people. (Please see *Lesson 8*.)

When Jesus appeared in “another form”, it was still Him. When Jesus talks about “another Comforter,” why should it be strange that it also could be Him? “*I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*” “*And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the*

world. Amen.” John 14:18; Matthew 28:20. Praise the Lord! It is so clear and simple. Jesus is withdrawn from the eye of sense, but His personal presence (His own Spirit) is still with us.

While the above is sufficient evidence, it is further confirmed by going deeper into the context. Let us compare what Jesus said about Himself with what He said about the other comforter. We will read John 14, verses 15–21.

Jesus	Comforter
1. “the world seeth me no more” vs. 19	1. The world “seeth him not” vs. 17
2. “but ye see me” vs. 19	2. “but ye know him” vs. 17
3. Jesus was with them at that time	3. “he dwelleth with you” vs. 17
4. “I in you” vs. 20	4. “shall be in you” vs. 17
5. “I will come to you” vs. 18	5. “give you another comforter” vs. 16
6. “Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world” Matthew 28:19	6. “he may abide with you forever” vs. 16

So, from the above, we can see the similarity between the role that the “other comforter” was to take, and what Jesus said He, not someone else, will do.

Yet the word that stands in the way of many people’s minds is “*another*.” It is the understanding that we have of this word that leads us to believe that it must be another being, someone else other than Jesus Himself. But is this true? Is it a correct understanding of the word? Is this the message that Jesus wanted to relay to His disciples?

Let us use the Bible as our interpreter. In 1 Samuel 10:6, we read what the prophet Samuel tells Saul:

“And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.”

Now the question is, did Saul become a different being? Certainly not! The term “*another man*” simply meant that he will be another, in the sense of filled with the Spirit of God, but he is still the

same being, not someone else. Not every time the Bible uses the word “another” it must mean that it is another being.

With this understanding, if we go back to John 14:16 and apply the principle, we can see that Jesus was talking about Himself in the third person. It was “*another comforter*” in the sense of “in another form.” Jesus was with them in human flesh, bodily form, but He was coming again in another form, a Spirit form. (In fact the Bible tells us that Jesus was made a life-giving Spirit; see 1 Corinthians 15:45.) That is why He said about the comforter “*he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.*”

Who was dwelling with them at that time? It was Jesus.

Who was to be in them? It is Jesus (verse 20).

Having said that, please notice the following from the context of John 14. If we follow Jesus’ words to “*love Him and keep His commandments*” the following will happen:

1. The Father will give you another comforter (John 14:15, 16).
2. Jesus will manifest Himself to us (John 14:21).
3. “We”—the Father and the Son—“*will come unto him and make our abode with him*” (John 14:23).

To someone it might appear that if we “*love Jesus and keep His commandments*” three different things will happen, either another comforter will come, or Jesus Himself will come, or the Father and the Son will come. But if we understand the Holy Spirit to be the Spirit of Jesus Himself, and knowing that the Father and the Son share the same Spirit/life (Romans 8:9; John 5:26; also refer to *Lessons 6 & 7*) and are therefore two in individuality, yet **one in spirit**, and heart, and character, then we can understand and harmonize the 3 different options. The comforter is the Spirit of Jesus Himself, which is the Spirit of the Father as well. That is why, when the Comforter comes, we will have the Father and the Son abiding with us (John 14:23).

10. OBJECTION 10—1 JOHN 5:7

1 John 5:7 “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

Objection:

This is a clear and plain text proving that the Father, Son, and Spirit are one God. How can you continue to reject the Trinity in light of this evidence?

Answer:

This text lists the three and says they are one. A Trinitarian will understand this to mean that they are one God. This is done by supplying the word “god” after “one.” But this is not what is stated in the verse. The actual verse explains that the “one” applies to the record that is borne, not to the persons of God. They are all one, in bearing the same record, as it says in the verse, “*three that bear record.*” From the context of the chapter (the whole epistle even) we learn that John is not expounding on the doctrine of who God is (or how many persons/beings). The immediate context of that passage offers the simple answer. Let us read verse 8, where another “three” are listed:

“And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.”

The oneness spoken of in this verse does not refer to the nature of the spirit, water, and blood. It is rather a oneness in agreement. They are one in that they all bear the same testimony: “agree in one”. This is obvious to any reader. This is exactly what John meant in verse 7. He uses almost the same words, elaborating more on them in verse 8. “These three” (Father, Word, Spirit) he says, “are one.” Not one God (or Godhead, as some call it), but **ONE IN TESTIMONY**. They all agree in giving the one testimony, **in bearing one record**.

What *is* the testimony or record that occupied John’s mind in his letter?

1 John 2:23 “Whosoever **denieth the Son**, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”

1 John 4:14 "And we have seen and do testify that **the Father sent the Son** to be the Saviour of the world."

1 John 4:15 "Whosoever shall confess that **Jesus is the Son of God**, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

1 John 5:5 "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that **Jesus is the Son of God?**"

John mentions the Son of God 18 times in this letter. It is rather obvious that the Sonship of Jesus was occupying his mind.

John further expounds and re-echoes what he wrote in 1 John 5:7, 8 in the next two verses:

a. *1 John 5:9* "If we receive the witness of men, **the witness of God is greater**: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son."

He points to the testimony or record that God the Father "testified of his Son." What is the record that God the Father gave of His Son?

Matthew 3:17 "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, **This is my beloved Son**, in whom I am well pleased." (see also Matthew 17:5)

b. *1 John 5:10* "He that believeth on the Son of God **hath the witness in himself**: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that **God gave of his Son**."

John also points to the testimony or record that the Spirit will convict the heart of the believers. What is the record that the Holy Spirit gave of Jesus through the Apostles?

Acts 8:37 "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, **I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God**."

Acts 9:20 "And straightway he [Paul] preached Christ in the synagogues, **that he is the Son of God**."

(And many, many other similar testimonies given by men moved by the Spirit of God.)

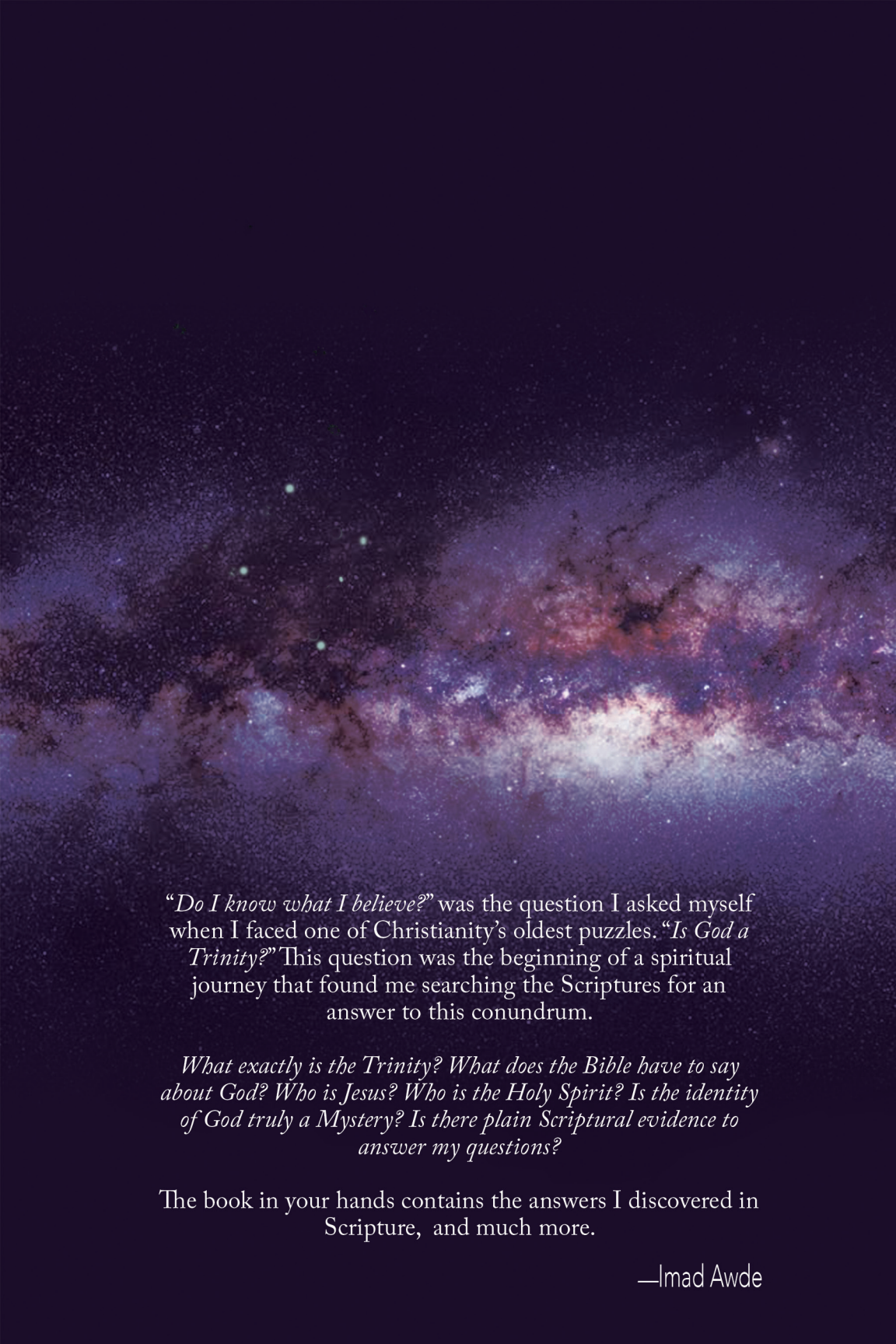
As you can see, after mentioning that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bear the same record and testimony, John refers to the testimony of the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Did Jesus bear the same record? We find the answer to our question in the gospel of John:

John 10:36 "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?"

Therefore, it is not dividing the word of truth correctly when we attempt to use 1 John 5:7 to teach that there are three, co-equal, co-eternal divine Persons or Beings. We are also breaking John's testimony when we deny that the Son of God was begotten (John 3:16) of the Father from the days of eternity (Micah 5:2), being so far back in the ages of eternity that it cannot be computed or calculated. To teach three, co-equal, co-eternal Beings is to deny the Father-Son relationship. It also denies that Jesus is the Son of the living God, reducing that noble relation to a mere metaphor and role-play! People who use this text to teach a Trinity (denying the Son of God) only serve the purpose of destroying the testimony that heaven is trying to reveal to us!

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“Do I know what I believe?” was the question I asked myself when I faced one of Christianity’s oldest puzzles. *“Is God a Trinity?”* This question was the beginning of a spiritual journey that found me searching the Scriptures for an answer to this conundrum.

What exactly is the Trinity? What does the Bible have to say about God? Who is Jesus? Who is the Holy Spirit? Is the identity of God truly a Mystery? Is there plain Scriptural evidence to answer my questions?

The book in your hands contains the answers I discovered in Scripture, and much more.

—Imad Awde