

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

January 1999

“Unto the church... which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 1:1) Happy New Year to all of you. I pray this year finds each of you more dedicated to the Lord than ever before. The year 2000 is very close now. Next month we will take a short look at the Y2K issue and how it may affect you. As we mentioned last month, this month’s newsletter goes into more detail as to how having false ideas about God affects our understanding of the atonement. I pray that you will find this study to be a blessing.

The Importance of Knowing the Truth About God

by Lynnford Beachy

When we speak of Christianity we must first begin with some kind of an understanding of God and who He is. Many would assume that all Christians have the same idea about who God is and His character, yet it is amazing that within Christianity there are various ideas about God. The purpose of this study is to show the importance of having a correct understanding of God, who He is, and His character.

The question may be asked: “Why does it matter what I believe about God?” This is a very good question, and worthy of examination. Let us take a few minutes and examine this in detail to ascertain whether or not having an accurate understanding about God is important.

John wrote, *“Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”* (1 John 5:5) There is something about believing that Jesus is the Son of God that enables us to overcome the world. God’s love was demonstrated by His giving up the greatest gift that anyone could ever give up—His only begotten Son. *“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) Certainly this is a very important thing to understand and believe.

Do you think Satan is aware of this? Certainly! Do you think Satan wants you to overcome the world? Certainly not! Satan’s goal is to have you believe that Jesus is not actually the Son of God. This is very serious, for it determines whether you will be able to overcome the world. More specifically, overcoming the world is overcoming sin, *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”* (1 John 2:16, 17)

Has Satan been successful in keeping the majority of Christians from believing that Jesus is the Son of God? Let’s examine this in more detail. The following statement of faith is representative of the prevailing Christian opinion about God.

“Though there is but one God, and though there cannot be more than one true God, still it is the clear testimony of Holy Scripture that there are in the Godhead THREE Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that these three are co-eternal and co-equal, not one before or after another, not greater or less than another, but one God.” (*Confession of Faith of the Calvinistic Methodists or the Presbyterians of Wales*. Adopted at the Associations of Aberystwyth and Bala in the year 1823, clause 4)

In the previous quotation these three *Persons* are said to be *co-eternal*. What does that mean? Well simply this: *they are the same age*. Are the Father and Son the same age? Have each one of them existed independent of the other since all of eternity? Was there no time when the

Son of God “*proceeded forth and came from God*”? (John 8:42) You see if the Father and His Son are the same age the Father is not really a father and His Son is not really a son.

John wrote, “*Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.*” (1 John 2:22) This is quite interesting. John predicted that the antichrist would deny the Father and the Son. We are living in the time when people deny the Father and the Son by denying that the Father is actually a father and the Son is actually a son.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God

The single act that demonstrated God’s love for us more than anything else is the fact that God gave up His only begotten Son to die for us. Now either God actually had an only begotten Son to give up for us, or God was lying when He told us that He gave up His only begotten Son. “*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.*” (1 John 5:10) Friends, do you believe the record that God gave of His Son? “*And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” (Matthew 3:17) God Himself said that Jesus Christ is His Son, please do not let anyone tell you differently. Surely the three-in-one concept, commonly known as the *Trinity* or triune God, denies the Father and the Son by denying that the Father is a father and that the Son is a son.

God said that Jesus Christ is His beloved Son. This is the foundation of the gospel, and Jesus said He would build His church upon this truth. “*When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 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. [The preceding four verses focused on who Jesus is.] 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 16:13-18) Jesus was not stating that He would build His church upon Peter, but upon the wonderful truth that Peter expressed. This truth is that Jesus is “*the Christ, the Son of the living God.*”

God loves you so much that He willingly gave up His only begotten Son so that you and I could have eternal

life. Paul wrote, “*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) It is amazing how much change can take place if we will only take time to contemplate the wonderful love God demonstrated by giving up His only begotten Son for poor sinners like you and me.

Paul warned us to be careful of accepting another gospel or another Jesus. “*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his, 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* [or “Well do you hold yourselves back from him”—Robertson’s *NT Word Pictures*].” (2 Corinthians 11:3, 4) Paul knew that there would be wolves in sheep’s clothing trying to present a false Jesus and a false gospel. Let us retain the true gospel as revealed in God’s Word, and discard every false teaching about God.

John wrote, “*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) Now if God sent His only begotten Son into the world, He had to have had an only begotten Son to send into the world prior to sending Him.

“But,” some say, “Jesus was not God’s Son until He came into the world.” Please read the following verse: “*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 tell?*” (Proverbs 30:4) Obviously the writer of Proverbs knew that God had a Son. When Nebuchadnezzar cast three men into the fire, “*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.*” (Daniel 3:25) Even Nebuchadnezzar knew, from his association with Daniel, that God had a Son.

Daniel clearly knew that God had a Son for He called Him the great Prince. A prince is a son of a king. “*And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*” (Daniel 12:1) Jesus is in reality the only begotten Son of the greatest King, God the Father. (For more information on Michael please read the following verses: Daniel 8:25; Jude 9; 1 Thessalonians 4:16.)

Carefully read these verses: “*For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out* ¹⁸³¹ *from God. I came forth* ¹⁸³¹ *from the Father, and am come* ²⁰⁶⁴ *into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.*” (John 16:27, 28)

The Greek word ἐξέρχομαι which was translated “came out” means this: “to come forth from physically, arise from, to be born of” (*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*) The Greek word ἐρχομαι which was translated “come” means this: “to come from one place to another.” (*ibid*) Clearly Jesus was begotten of His Father before the world was. At the appointed time He came into the world to redeem fallen mankind.

Paul wrote concerning Jesus Christ, stating that He “is the *image* ¹⁵⁰⁴ [“likeness” *ibid*] of the invisible God, the *firstborn* ⁴⁴¹⁶ of every creature.” (Colossians 1:15) The Greek word πρῶτοτοκος that was translated “first-born” means this: “Firstbegotten (-born), the alternate of (5088) meaning to produce (from seed as a mother), bear, be born, bring forth, be delivered.” (*Strong’s Concordance*) “Christ is called, firstborn of all creation, who came into being through God prior to the entire universe of created things.” (*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*) “Or it may be; born before all creation.” (*Wigram’s Greek Lexicon*) According to the text Jesus was begotten of the Father before anything was created. Please notice that **Jesus was not created** (the Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that He was). He could not have been created, for everything that was created was created by Him. (See Colossians 1:16, 17.)

John the Baptist also affirmed the fact that Jesus was born in heaven prior to coming into this world. “*John [who was six months older than Jesus] bare witness of Him, and cried, saying, This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred* ¹⁰⁹⁶ *before me: for He was before me.*” (John 1:15) “*This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred* ¹⁰⁹⁶ *before me: for He was before me.*” (John 1:30) The Greek word that was translated “preferred” means this: “to become, i.e. to come into existence, begin to be, receive being.” (*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*)

Now that we have looked at the birth of Christ in the New Testament, let’s look at His birth in the Old Testament. “*But thou, Bethlehem, 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* ⁴¹⁶³ [origin] *have been from of old, from everlasting* [margin: the days of eternity].” (Micah 5:2) “*Whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.*” (Revised Standard Version)

This verse is talking about the Son of God, whose origin (beginning) was long before the beginning of this world; and time as we know it. We know that this verse is

talking about the Son of God, because it is quoted by Matthew referring to Him. “*And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.*” (Matthew 2:4-6)

The Scriptures again affirm the wonderful truth that Christ was brought forth from the Father. In the first verse of Proverbs 8 it says that *Wisdom* is speaking. Who is *Wisdom*? In verse 8 it tells us that He has a mouth, and speaks. “*But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*” (1 Corinthians 1:24) “*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) Christ is spoken of as “*the Wisdom of God*” and is speaking in Proverbs chapter eight under the symbol of *Wisdom*.

“*When there were no depths, I was brought forth* ²³⁴²; *when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth* ²³⁴².” (Proverbs 8:24, 25)

Also in another version—The 1965 Bible in Basic English: “*When there was no deep I was given birth, when there were no fountains flowing with water. Before the mountains were put in their places, before the hills was my birth.*”

The Hebrew verb which was translated *brought forth* in these two verses is in the Pual form. In Hebrew there are many forms of each verb. Each of these forms can have a different meaning. The definition for the Pual form is the only definition that can apply in these verses. This definition is as follows: “to be made to writhe, be made to bear, to be brought forth.” (*Brown-Driver Brigg’s Hebrew Lexicon*) This verb, in this form, is only used four times in the Bible, and here is another example of how it is used in the Pual form of the verb. “*Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made* ²³⁴² *before the hills?*” (Job 15:7)

If Proverbs 8:24, 25 were talking merely about an intellectual wisdom, then you must say that at some point God acquired wisdom, and that there was a time when He did not have wisdom. These verses cannot be talking about that, but rather the origin, or the begetting, of the Son of God.

Let us continue on with some more verses in Proverbs chapter eight, and learn more about the characteristics of *Wisdom*.

“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 8:26-30) God gave up His only begotten Son for you, not a Son by name or title only, but His only, true and literal begotten Son.

There are many sincere Christians who maintain that the terms “Father” and “Son” as revealed in Scripture do not really mean father and son, but rather express *roles* they accept in carrying out the plan of salvation. For example, one Protestant writer wrote the following:

“It may be inferred from the Scriptures that when the Godhead laid out the plan of salvation at some point in eternity past, They took certain *positions* or *roles* to carry out the provisions of the plan.” (*Signs of the Times*, July, 1985)

Certainly you can see how plainly the above idea denies the Father and the Son. Not by denying that there are two beings called Father and Son, but by denying that the Father is actually a Father, and denying that the Son is actually a Son. With this teaching God’s wonderful love in giving up His only begotten Son is effectively distorted. One is left with merely an act, or a play, rather than an immense sacrifice on the part of both God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Please consider the following: “*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* ⁵⁸⁴¹ [“a precise reproduction in every respect”—*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*] *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; Being made* ¹⁰⁹⁶ [“to become, i.e. to come into existence, begin to be, receive being”—*ibid*] *so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*” (Hebrews 1:1-4)

God really had a Son who was brought forth in the express image of the Father. God appointed His Son to be heir of all things, and gave Him a name above every name. God loves His Son very, very much, yet He was willing to give Him up for you and me. God loves us as much as He loves His only begotten Son. Jesus prayed to His Father “*that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*” (John

17:23) What great love God has for you and me! Words cannot describe the wonderful love that God has for us. Let us appreciate His kindness more fully.

Did the Son of God Die?

This may sound like a strange question, but let us examine it in detail. First let me give a quotation from a prominent *trinitarian* book.

“When Christ came into the world, a ‘body’ had been prepared for Him (Heb. 10:5). When He took upon Himself humanity, His divinity was clothed with humanity. This was not accomplished by changing humanity into divinity or divinity into humanity. He did not go out of Himself to another nature, but took humanity into Himself. Thus divinity and humanity were combined.

“When He became incarnate, Christ did not cease to be God, nor was His divinity reduced to the level of humanity. Each nature kept its standing. ‘in Him,’ Paul says, ‘dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily’ (Col. 2:9). At the crucifixion His human nature died, not His deity, for that would have been impossible.” (*Adventists Believe...* page 51). “Christ’s divine nature cannot die. In order to die, then, Christ had to have a human nature.” (*Seventh-day Adventists Believe...* page 50).

What they are saying here is that “*God the Son*” came down to earth and dwelt in a human body for thirty three years, and at the end of these years the human body died, while the being who came down from heaven remained alive. This theory undermines the atonement. For the Son of God had to die to redeem us back to His Father. A human sacrifice would never do, and this is exactly what you have if the divine being who came down from heaven did not die. A human sacrifice could never save anyone, even if that human had never committed a sin in his life. “*Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?*” (Micah 6:7) The implied answer is, No! Nothing less than the death of the divine Son of God could ever atone for the breaking of God’s commandments. Without the death of the Son of God we cannot be forgiven of our sins.

Read the following verses carefully. “*And if Christ be not raised [from the dead], your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.*” (1 Corinthians 15:17) “*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.*” (1 Corinthians 15:3) “*I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*” (Galatians 2:21) If God could have forgiven us any other way than to let His only begotten Son die for us, He would have done it, but there was no other way that we might be saved, so His love for us constrained Him to give up His only begotten Son.

Please notice that in the above verses Paul was very particular to use the divine name of the Son of God rather than the name *Jesus* which He received at His birth in Bethlehem. Paul wanted to make it clear that it was the divine Son of God who died, rather than merely a human body.

Who Was It That Died for Us?

Paul wrote, “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation*”²⁷⁵⁸ [“to empty, to deprive of force, of Christ, he laid aside equality with or the form of God”—*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*], and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name.” (Philippians 2:5-9) The same one who was in the form of God in verse six died in verse eight. The one who died is the same one who came down from heaven. The one who died was not merely a human part that had never been in heaven, but the same one who was in heaven with His Father.

Jesus declared, “*I am He that , and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*” (Revelation 1:18) Jesus Himself, after He was glorified and gone to heaven, said that He is the one who was dead. John wrote these words: “*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*” (John 1:14) The same *Word* that created all things was made flesh. It doesn’t say the *Word* somehow took flesh onto Himself, but it says “*the Word was made flesh.*” That *Word* is the One who died to redeem us back to God, His Father.

John warned us that “*many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*” (2 John 7) We are given strong warnings not to accept false teachings concerning this issue.

The reason *Trinitarians* are compelled to say that the divine part that came down from heaven did not die is because the Bible says that God cannot die. (1 Timothy 6:16) Therefore, if Jesus was exactly like His Father in every respect, He could not die under any circumstance. This would leave nothing but a human sacrifice. The *Trinity* doctrine has many such impossible contradictions that confuse even the most perceptive *Trinitarians*. Athanasius himself, one of the original propagators of this false doctrine, admits that he was confused about the things he was trying to teach. He “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, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter XXI, paragraph 8)

Would it Have Been Possible for Jesus to Sin?

Certainly Christ did not sin, yet the Bible makes it clear that He was tempted in all points like you and me. But if Jesus was in every respect exactly like His Father, as Trinitarians claim, then the possibility of Jesus sinning would not have existed, and consequently He could not have been tempted. Being tempted is something the Bible says could not have happened to God the Father. “*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither He any man.*” (James 1:13) Praise God that Jesus was tempted and that He overcame in every point.

Jesus “*was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*” (Hebrews 4:15) Jesus was tempted to sin, but was it possible for Him to sin? Certainly, for if not, then Satan would have been wasting his time when He continually assailed Jesus with many temptations. When Jesus Christ was made flesh, all the risks that we have as humans were fully realized by Christ. It had to have been this way or we would not have an example that we could follow.

The Scriptures tell us that “*the government shall be upon His shoulder.*” (Isaiah 9:6) God’s entire government rested upon the shoulders of the young baby in Bethlehem. If He should fail, the entire government of God would fail and Satan would be victorious. If Satan could get Jesus to commit one sin, then he would be victorious. Praise God that Jesus did not yield in any point to the wicked foe.

What would the consequences have been if Christ had failed? “*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” (Romans 6:23) If Jesus had sinned, He would have had to pay the penalty along with the rest of us sinners. Jesus would have died forever, never to return to life again. That was a real risk that was involved, yet both the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, were willing to take that risk for you and me. Words cannot express the depth of God’s wonderful love for us.

If the Trinity were a true doctrine, then none of the three “*Persons*” could die under any circumstance. If that were the case, then Jesus would have known for sure that, no matter what happened He was going to return to heaven to be with the other two “*Persons*” whom He had

left behind. If this were the case Jesus could not have sinned under any circumstance. With this scenario God never really risked anything. Nothing would have been at stake, and the whole plan would have been a sham, a fake. God forbid that we hold any such absurdities. Surely you can see the fallacy of such teachings.

How much does God love you? Is it only enough to put on a play to act as if He had made some great sacrifice, when in reality nothing was at stake, and He had nothing to lose? Friends can't you see the danger of holding such doctrines? I am sure you do.

God loves you so much that He was willing to take the chance that His only begotten Son would die forever, just to redeem you and me back to Him. God loves you and me as much as He loves His only begotten Son. Praise His holy name. He is so earnestly trying to free every man, woman and child from every misconception they have of His character. All deceptive dealings, all untruthfulness regarding the Father and the Son, by which their characters are presented in a false light, are to be recognized as serious sins.

Let's Look at the Facts

Let's take a moment to examine some very interesting facts. We will compare some of the Trinitarian ideas with what the Bible actually says.

Did Jesus Raise Himself From the dead?

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| <u>"God raised Him from the dead."</u> (Acts 13:30) | <u>"Jesus was exactly like the Father, therefore He could not die completely, and did raise Himself from the dead."</u> (One verse seems to imply this, i.e. John 2:19) |
| Acts 2:24,30,32; 3:15,26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:23,30,33,34,37; 17:31; 26:8; Romans 4:24,25; 6:4; 8:11; 10:9; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 15:15; 2 Corinthians 4:14; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Timothy 2:8; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 1:21 (30 verses found) | |

The Spirit of Christ inspired David to write concerning Christ's death, **"I am shut up, and I cannot come forth."** (Psalm 88:8) Christ was shut up in the tomb, and He could not come forth. The Bible says more than thirty times that God, the Father, raised Christ from the dead. Christ did not raise Himself from the dead, or else He was not really dead. **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."** (Romans 10:9)

Didn't Jesus Say He Had Power to Take Back His Life?

There are some who use the following verse as proof that Jesus Christ did not really die completely, without regard to the numerous verses showing that His Father raised Him from the dead: **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."** (John 10:17, 18)

The Greek word that was translated **"I might take,"** (with Strong's number 2983) can mean take, but also means this: **"to receive (what is given), to gain, get, obtain, to get back."** (Thayer's Greek Lexicon) Please notice that this word is also used in verse 18 but is translated **"have I received."** Christ laid down His life that He might receive it again. The Greek word that was translated **"power"** can mean power, but can also mean **"authority, permission."** (Thayer's Greek Lexicon) Christ had permission to lay down His life so that He could receive it again from His Father. Christ could not, and did not, raise Himself from the dead or else He would not have been dead to begin with.

To make the claim that Jesus Christ raised Himself from the dead would be to directly contradict the words of

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| <u>"God, the Father"</u> John 6:27; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 1:1,3; Ephesians 6:23; Philippians 2:11; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:17; 2 John 3; Jude 1 (13 verses in all) | <u>"God, the Father"</u> John 6:27; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 1:1,3; Ephesians 6:23; Philippians 2:11; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:17; 2 John 3; Jude 1 (13 verses in all) |
| <u>"The Son of God"</u> Daniel 3:25; Matthew 4:3,6; 14:33; 26:63; 27:40,43,54; Mark 16:7; Luke 1:35; 3:38; 4:3,9,41; 22:70; John 1:1,3,4,9; 5:25; 9:35; 10:36; 11:4; 12:17; 19:7; 20:31; Acts 8:37; 13:9,20; Romans 1:4; 2 Corinthians 1:19; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:13; Hebrews 4:14; 6:6; 7:3; 10:29; 1 John 4:19 (44 verses in all) | <u>"God, the Son"</u> (No verses found) |
| <u>"The Holy Spirit of God"</u> (Eph. 4:30) (One verse found) | <u>"God, the Holy Spirit"</u> (No verses found) |
| <u>"The Spirit of God"</u> (25 verses in all) | |

Christ. For Christ said, *"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."* (John 5:30)

In Isaiah 53 we read the following account: *"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.... Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."* (Isaiah 53:10-12)

According to the Scripture, the soul of Christ died; the soul of Christ is what was made an offering for sin. We are told that the soul of Christ was in the grave. On the day of Pentecost Peter said, *"He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell⁸⁶, neither his flesh did see corruption."* (Acts 2:31) The word hell in the preceding verse was translated from the Greek word *ᾅδης* (Hades). This word means grave in every case. The soul of Christ rested with His body in the tomb.

In Hebrews chapter one, Paul portrays Christ as being highly exalted, the one who was begotten in the express image of His Father's person. In Hebrews chapter two, Paul explains the necessity of Christ becoming a man so that He could redeem us. In verse nine of this chapter he explains, *"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."* (Hebrews 2:9) Paul explains the importance of Christ becoming a man, made a little lower than the angels, so that He could die. This verse would mean absolutely nothing if the Son of God did not die completely. If only a human half of Jesus Christ died there would be no need for Jesus to be *"made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death."*

Something to Think About

In Psalm 110:1 God the Father speaks to His Son. In Matthew 3:17 God the Father speaks to His Son, In Hebrews 1:8, God the Father speaks to His Son. In Zechariah 6:12, 13 God the Father counsels with His Son. According to the Scripture only two individuals were in that counsel. If the Holy Spirit was a third separate God, why did not God allow him to be part of that private counsel between the Father and His Son? If the Holy Spirit was a third, separate being, why did he never speak to the Father or His Son at any time? No hint of such conversation is found anywhere in the Bible. Why did not Jesus speak to

the Holy Spirit, but rather always spoke to His Father in heaven? If the Holy Spirit was a third God, why did the Father never speak to him anywhere in the Bible? Why are there only two thrones mentioned in the book of Revelation, which will be in the new earth? *"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."* (Revelation 21:22)

There was another being trying to have equality with the Father who actually invented a false concept of God, where he could be equal with the Father. Scripture declares that some have *"changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."* (Romans 1:25) This very thing has happened. Men with fanciful ideas have changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the creator. Paul, reasoning with the Corinthians, wrote, *"What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils."* (1 Corinthians 10:19, 20)

Satan knows that if he can get people to offer prayers, thanksgiving, intercession, etc.... to idols, then he will be the one who is worshiped. An idol does not have to be an outward object for the eyes to rest upon for the priests of Baal cried out to their god, even though there was not an idol there to rest their eyes upon. They were certainly serving Satan rather than God. *"And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked."* (1 Kings 18:26, 27)

We may not have an outward object to rest our eyes upon, but if we have a false concept of God then we are as verily worshiping Satan as were the servants of Baal. For it is as easy to fashion gods of wood or stone as it is to cherish some false concept of God. Satan is well pleased if he can get people to hold a false concept of God, and will do his utmost to incite these people to defend their position, though they have no Scriptural evidence to stand upon. May God have mercy upon each one of us that He may show us the truth concerning His character of love for each one of us. *"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."* (Acts 17:30)

Jesus gave us a startling warning. He said, *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the*

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kingdom of heaven; but he that the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:21-23) The word Baal actually means “Lord.” The servants of Baal cried out “Lord, Lord,” yet the Lord was not honored by them. Just calling on the Lord is not good enough. God is longing for us to have a close, personal relationship with Him.

Light has been revealed to you, and now it is your duty to be as the Bereans who “received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” (Acts 17:11) Don’t follow the example of those who reject knowledge. “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)

We are instructed to prove all things. “Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” (1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21) It doesn’t say prove some things, but prove all things. “Beloved, believe not

every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1)

Understanding God’s love for us produces in us a responding love for God. The more we understand and appreciate God’s love for us, the more we will love God in return. It is only by knowing and believing that God so loved the world that He gave up His only begotten Son that we can truly have our love for God perfected. God is longing to find people on this earth who love Him with all their hearts—with whom He is well pleased to have close fellowship. *You* can be one of those people.

The purpose of this paper is to help reveal the depth of God’s love in giving up His only begotten Son. I pray that God’s love will be made clearer to you each day so that your love for Him will increase continually. ✍

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