

A scenic view of a mountain valley. In the background, there are jagged, rocky mountain peaks under a blue sky with some clouds. The middle ground is filled with dense green forests. In the foreground, there are rolling green hills with a small village. The village includes a prominent church with a tall, thin steeple and several houses with dark roofs. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and picturesque.

Theos

Chapter 2

Begotten Forgotten

The last living disciple, John the beloved, John the Revelator, near the end of his life said, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1John 1:3).

With the end of the apostolic era the church of Ephesus was replaced by the church of Smyrna (Rev 2:1,8). Now belief in God and His Son was faced with tribulation and persecution. Polycarp, Iranaeus, Justin Martyr defended the truth of “the one true God and Jesus Christ” with their very lives.

We now know that “this Nazarene Christianity was the dominant form of Christianity in the first and second centuries,” a form that was “binitarian” in its devotion to Jesus and his Father. (Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ, Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI 2003, pp. 560, 618).

But from this pure, simple faith in **one God** the Father and **one Lord** Jesus Christ (1Cor 8:6), there soon was “a falling away” (2 Thes 2:3).

Paul saw it coming. “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Acts 20:29,30.

Peter saw this danger as well, saying, “there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them” 2Pet 2:1.

John then gave the final warning. “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come” (1John 2:18). Antichrist—that great evil enemy of God was coming. And who is He? “He is antichrist that denies the Father and the Son.” (v 22).

Antichrist would deny the truth that our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. He did this by attacking the Father-Son relationship in one of two ways.

The first was to make them the *same* person. God was thus the Father in the Old Testament and the Son in

the New Testament. Sabellius came up with this “modal” idea in the early part of the third century. He taught that God was sometimes a father, sometimes a son—He just wore different hats depending on the situation. God was not *really* a Father nor was Christ *really* a Son.

The second way in which anti-christ could deny the Father and Son was to let them be two separate persons but require them to be part of a *single* indivisible God being. This demanded that they be co-eternal, co-equal, co-substantial. Again, God could not be a real Father or have a real Son; these were just metaphors.

While the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople were producing their creeds defining one God of undivided substance composed of three co-equal persons, other councils met professing the original belief in God and His Christ (Rev 12:10).

measure (John 3:34) and is sent as the Spirit of the Son into our hearts (Gal 4:6). Pope Liberius in Rome and the Bishop of Constantinople Macedonius took their stand with this belief.

But by the end of the 4th century the falling away was complete. Creeds had taken the place of the Bible. The “traditions of men” held sway over the Word of God, and with a firmly establish creed that could be enforced it soon was. Excommunication, Inquisition and Crusade became weapons in the hands of bishops and popes.

Those who continued to believe in the Father and His Son were chased “into the wilderness” where they had “a place prepared of God” Rev 12:6. Here for over a thousand years, they could remain true to their conscience and true to the Word. This issue will trace the story of these faithful ones.

Ulfilas and the Goths



The Council of Sirmium in 357, the Council of Rimini in 359, the Council of Lampsacus in 364 all adhered to the belief that Jesus is God from God (John 8:42; 16:27,28; 17:8), begotten of the Father before all worlds (Prov 8:22-24; Micah 5:2) and the Holy Spirit was not begotten but was the power of God (Luke 1:35) proceeding from God the Father (John 15:26) as His presence (Ps 51:11; 139:7) was given to the Son without

Ulfilas (c. 311-383 AD) was ordained by Eusebius of Nicomedia, a supporter of Arius, around 340 AD. To escape persecution, he migrated to what is now northern Bulgaria west of the Black Sea, under the protection of emperor Constantius II, where he translated the Bible from Greek into the Gothic language. Ulfilas was the “Apostle to the Goths,” a missionary who converted many Visigoths to the Christianity of Scripture.

Unlike Arius, we know quite well just what Ulfilas believed. His confession can be found in a letter written by Auxentius of Durostorum, his foster-son. It fully agrees with 1Corinthians 8:6 and Ephesians 1:17.

ered. *Codex Argenteus*, written on purple vellum in gold and silver letters, dates from the sixth century, was discovered in 1597, and is now preserved at the Carolina Rediviva library of Uppsala, Sweden.

accepting the literal reading of God’s Word and presented a simple faith, not a mystical metaphysical creed.

Patrick’s Confession

Neither Irish nor Catholic, Patrick is nonetheless adopted as the patron saint of the Emerald Isle. He was actually born in Britain in the late 4th century. Patrick was then kidnapped by Irish pirates from his home along the Scottish coastline and taken to Ireland at the age of 16. After working as a slave for several years, he became a Christian and one night had a dream that a ship was coming to pick him up and return him to his home. He ran away and boarded the ship to gain his freedom once again.



Legend claims that Patrick used the shamrock to illustrate the Trinity. It is said that he would ask unbelievers, “Is it one leaf, or three?” Of course the answer, he would point out, is that it is both.

But long before Patrick, the Druids revered the trefoil shamrock because of the mystical importance that the pagan Celts placed on the number three. The three-leaved clover in Arabia is called shamrakh and is worshiped in Persia as a symbol of the Persian Triad of earth, water, and fire.

In the only work that exists written by Patrick around 450AD (Confessio) we learn of his actual beliefs.

I, Ulfila, bishop and confessor, have always so believed, and in this, the one true faith, I make the journey to my Lord; I believe in one God the Father, the only unbegotten and invisible, and in his only-begotten son, our Lord and God, the designer and maker of all creation, having none other like him (so that one alone among all beings is God the Father, who is also the God of our God); and in one Holy Spirit, the illuminating and sanctifying power, as Christ said after his resurrection to his apostles: “And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49) and again “But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (Acts 1:8); being neither God (the Father) nor our God (Christ), but the minister of Christ ... subject and obedient in all things to the Son; and the Son, subject and obedient in all things to God who is his Father ... (whom) he ordained in the Holy Spirit through his Christ. Heather and Matthews, *Goths in the Fourth Century*, p. 143.

It is of interest that Ulfilas refers to both the Father and His Son as God but distinguishes them as well. The Father is the God of our God; the Father is unbegotten and invisible (see 1Timothy 1:17). His Son is His only-begotten, the Creator of all things (John 1:3; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2). The Holy Spirit, according to Ulfilas, is (as with the Councils of Rimini, Sirmium and Lampsacus) the power of God (Luke 1:35; 1Cor 1:34).

Ulfilas was so influential among the Gothic people that by 370 AD a new flock of Christian converts from the Danube joined his mission at the foot of mount Haemus. A decade later conversion of the entire Gothic nation was complete.

Probably the greatest testimony to the work of Ulfilas was his translation of the Bible into the Gothic language, a task which required him to invent a new alphabet—consisting of Greek and Runic letters. It is the oldest existing example of any Teutonic language. Seven manuscripts have been discov-



A page from the Codex

Ufilas was originally from Cappidocia but was captured by the Goths at an early age. Like Daniel, they gave him a name in their own language, Wulfia, “little wolf.” He so identified himself with them that he was ultimately able to introduce them to the wonderful God of heaven and His only begotten Son, the Saviour of mankind. Ulfias followed the school of Lucian in

“For **there is no other God**, nor ever was before, nor shall be hereafter, **but God the Father, unbegotten and without beginning**, in whom all things began, whose are all things, as we have been taught; **and his son Jesus Christ**, who manifestly **always existed with the Father, before the beginning of time in the spirit with the Father, indescribably begotten before all things**, and all things visible and invisible were made by him. He was made man, conquered death and was received into Heaven, to the Father who gave him all power over every name in Heaven and on Earth and in Hell, so that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God, in whom we believe. And we look to his imminent coming again, the judge of the living and the dead, who will render to each according to his deeds. **And he poured out his Holy Spirit on us in abundance, the gift and pledge of immortality**, which makes the believers and the obedient into sons of God and co-heirs of Christ who is revealed.”

Patrick’s confession of faith is remarkable in that he identifies one God, the Father, who is unbegotten and without beginning. In contrast to God the Father, he states that His son Jesus Christ had existed with the Father before the beginning of time in spirit form and was begotten before all things in some indescribable way. It is noteworthy that Patrick does not use the language of Constantinople “eternally begotten.” Rather, he describes a single event then ends by saying,

“...and we worship one God in the Trinity of holy name.”

The last phrase refers to Matthew 28:19 in the only recorded baptismal formula invoking “the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” The other gospels instruct the disciples to simply preach the gospel. Mark 16:16 “And he that believes and is baptized shall be saved.” Luke 24:47 “Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations...” Here there isn’t even a command to baptize. And John gives no instruction about preaching!

Matthew 28:19 makes no mention of persons or beings or their nature. It does not identify who the Holy Spirit is. It appears that the disciples were either unaware of this three-fold commission (because it was added by a later manuscript editor) or they understood it differently than is commonly explained today. Why is this? Because in every instance of baptism recorded in the New Testament after Christ’s ascension, only the name of Jesus is invoked.

Acts 2:38 Be baptized every one of you **in the name of Jesus Christ**.

In the **name of Jesus Christ**, they were baptized (by Philip in Samaria) 8:12 in the **name of the Lord Jesus** 8:16 (by Peter and John in Samaria)

Jesus Christ is the Son of God 8:37 (confession of the Ethiopian as Philip baptized him)

in the **name of the Lord** 10:48

(new converts in Cornelius’ household)

in the **name of the Lord Jesus** 19:5

(to the converts in Ephesus)

in the **name of the Lord** 22:15

(when Saul was baptized by Ananias)

In 1Cor 1:13 Paul asked, **Is Christ divided?** was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul? Here he implies that they were indeed baptized in the name of Christ not Paul. Yes, they were

baptized into Christ Gal 3:27.

baptized into Jesus Christ Rom 6:3

Buried with him in baptism Col 2:12

washed, sanctified and justified in the **name of the Lord Jesus** 1Cor 6:11 there is **none other name** under heaven given among men Acts 4:12

through his name

whosoever believeth in him Acts 10:43 God has...given him **a name which is above every name** ...

that Jesus Christ is Lord Phil 2:9-11

In fact, we are to **do all in the name** of the Lord Jesus Col 3:17

It is widely recognized that the three-fold baptismal formula was added after the apostolic period.

“The historical riddle is not solved by Matthew 28:19, since, according to a wide scholarly consensus, it is not an authentic saying of Jesus, not even an

elaboration of a Jesus-saying on baptism” (The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, 1992, p. 585).

“The New Testament knows only **baptism in the name of Jesus**... which still occurs even in the second and third centuries.” *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, (1957 edition), Vol. I, p.435

Matthew 28:19 “... has been disputed on textual grounds, but in the opinion of many scholars the words may still be regarded as part of the true text of Matthew. There is, however, **grave doubt whether they may be the ipsissima verba** [actual words] **of Jesus**. The evidence of Acts 2:38; 10:48 (cf. 8:16; 19:5), supported by Gal. 3:27; Rom 6:3, suggest that baptism in early Christianity was administered, not in the threefold name, but “in the name of Jesus Christ” or “in the name of the Lord Jesus.” (The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible, 1962, p. 351).

“There is a good possibility that in its original form, as witnessed by the ante-Nicene Eusebian form, the text read “make disciples in my name”” (*Word Biblical Commentary*, Vol 33B; Donald A. Hagner, 1975, page 887).

“**Critical scholarship, on the whole, rejects the traditional attribution of the tripartite baptismal formula to Jesus and regards it as of later origin**. Undoubtedly then the baptismal formula originally consisted of one part and it gradually developed into its tripartite form.” (*The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, Vol. 1, Harry Austryn Wolfson, 1964, p. 143).

“Catholics acknowledge that **baptism in Jesus’ name was changed by the Catholic church**.” *Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol 2, p. 377.

As it does with the change of the Sabbath to Sunday and Passover to Easter, the Roman church also claims responsibility for altering the original baptismal formula. Consequently, it now recognizes all Protestant denominations as truly Christian if they conduct a proper baptism—not one in which they baptize by immersion rather than sprinkling, but because they do so in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The Church that gave us another Day, and another Baptism, also gave us another Comforter. The Sunday

was substituted for the Sabbath in 321 AD by the decree of Constantine. The Third Person of the Trinity became an official reality at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD. The Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ was elevated into a fully separate person of the Godhead—distinct from the Father and Son and now deemed worthy of individual praise and worship.

These early church councils took place during the Church of Pergamus period described in Revelation 2. This third church was assaulted by two false doctrines: the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. It is no coincidence that the doctrines of Sunday sacredness and the Trinity emerged at this time. Neither can find any authoritative support within the pages of the Bible. Both are claimed by the Roman Church as evidence of her ecclesiastical authority.

The Catholic *Doctrinal Catechism* from 1854 readily demonstrates the papal claims over Scriptural authority and the acceptance by Protestants of papal tradition.

“Q. Have you any other proofs that they [Protestants] are not guided by the Scriptures?”

“A. Yes; so many that we cannot admit more than a mere specimen into this small work. They reject much that is clearly contained in Scripture, and profess more that is nowhere discoverable in that Divine Book.”

“Q. Give some examples of both?”

“A. They should, if the Scripture were their only rule, **wash the feet of one another**, according to the command of Christ, in the 13th chap. of St. John; - they should **keep, not the Sunday, but the Saturday**, according to the commandment, ‘Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath-day;’ for this commandment has not, in Scripture, been changed or abrogated.”

“Q. Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?”

“A. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; - she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday,

the seventh day, a change for which **there is no Scriptural authority.**

“Q. Do you observe other necessary truths as taught by the Church, **not clearly laid down in Scripture?**

“A. The doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine the knowledge of which is certainly necessary to salvation, is **not explicitly and evidently laid down in Scripture**, in the Protestant sense of private interpretation.”

Today the whole world wonders after the Vatican (Rev 13:3) and so few “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth” (Rev 14:4). Jesus predicted this when he said, “Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” Matt 7:14.

the first horns plucked up by the roots.” Dan 7:8.

Daniel’s dream was a prophecy of future events. From his point in time (about 545 BC), he saw the sequence of world kingdoms—Babylon, Persia, Greece—leading up to the fourth kingdom: Rome. History records the fall of imperial Rome in 476 AD as invading tribes from the north divided the empire into 10 regions of power: the ten horns. But from among these a little horn arose that would “pluck up” three of the original powers.

This little horn had “eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things” Dan 7:8,20. It “made war with the saints and prevailed



Three Uprooted Horns

Daniel saw the whole thing. “...and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.” Dan 7:7. Daniel was then told that “these beasts which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.” Verse 17.

“I considered the horns, and there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of

against them” verse 21, and “shall subdue three kings” verse 24.

This little horn “shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws” verse 25. What was this little horn power?

It opposed the most High (God); it opposed the people of God, making war with them, and winning the war by subduing three kings, plucking them up, uprooting them, removing them from power.

In Daniel 7 this little horn power lasts for 3½ times (verse 25). In the

book of Revelation we see it again. “And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies...against God.” Rev 13:5. “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them” verse 7. This is obviously the same power that opposes God and His saints, His holy people. “And power was given unto him to continue forty and two months” verse 5. This is another clue equal to the 3½ times of Daniel 7.

42 months of 30 days each is 1260.
3½ times of 360 days each is 1260.

But this power that comes after “the falling away” of 2Thes 2:3 “opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” verse 4. This is just amazing! Who would dare challenge the God of the universe with such audacity!

“O Lucifer, son of the morning!” Isaiah 14:12 identifies one who would presume to be God. He was the one who “sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.” Ezekiel 28:12. He was “in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone” was his covering (verse 13). He was “the anointed cherub that covers (the ark, the throne of God: Ex 25:18-20); he “was upon the holy mountain of God” and he “walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire” verse 14. He was “perfect in *his* ways from the day that *he* was created, till iniquity was found in *him*” verse 15.

Lucifer, this prince of angels, was determined to go straight to the top, to exalt his throne, above the clouds, above the stars, to ultimately be God! He would let nothing get in his way. As a result, “there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon...and his angels” Rev 12:7 “the third part of the stars of heaven” verse 4. “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan (originally Lucifer), which deceiveth the whole world” after deceiving a third of heaven (verse 9).



“And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman (the church: Jer 6:2) which brought forth the man child (Jesus: Luke 2:7). And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness into her place where she is nourished for a

was allowed to teach and mislead the servants of God (verse 20). Like Jezebel the queen who controlled the prophets of Baal, this church “reigns” (Rev 17:18) bearing on her forehead the name “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, MOTHER OF HARLOTS” (verse 5). From the 6th to the 18th centuries the church of Rome ruled with the kings of Europe the Holy Roman Empire, eradicating what it considered heresy, burning scores of thousands at the stake for following their conscience and the Word of God.

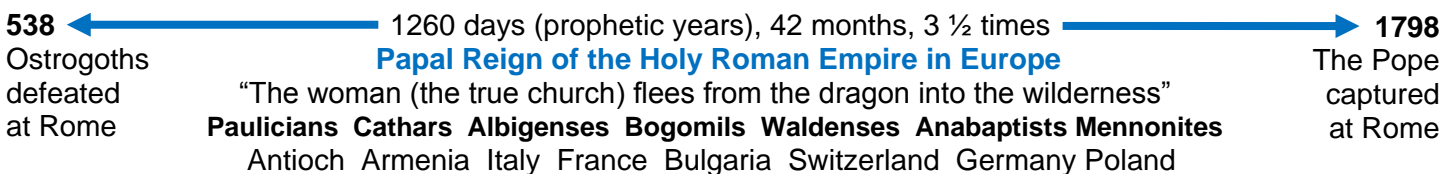
At the very beginning of her rise to power, the church declared war on those who refused to follow her new creed. Three Christian nations were her target: the Ostrogoths from the Balkans, the Carthaginians in North Africa, and the Heruli of Italy—all rejected Rome’s trinity. And it was this that drew the dragon’s fire. The Heruli were first to fall in 493. Next, the Carthaginians were subdued by the Roman army in 533, and finally the Ostrogoths in 538.

The Christians who believed Jesus to be the true Son of the one true God were exterminated by the little horn power of papal Rome because they refused to accept “a god whom his fathers knew not” Dan 11:38.

Church in the Wilderness

Rome’s war against the saints was yet to continue another thousand years. Her heretics were sought out and tracked down century after century.

Perhaps the earliest group arose



“Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” Isaiah 14:13,14. I will be God!

time, and times and half a time” Rev 12:13,14. The same time period, 3½ times, 42 months, 1260 days of persecution by the dragon, by the covering cherub who would be God.

This was now the time of Thyatira, the fourth church of Revelation 2:18. Another woman, like Jezebel of old,

out of Antioch and migrated through Mesopotamia to Armenia within the first few centuries. These were later known as the Paulicians. Edward Gibbon in his famous History said, “This was the primitive form of Christianity” that “spread in the Taurus mountains as far as Ararat.” (*Rise and*

Fall of the Roman Empire, Bury edition, Vol. VI, p. 543).

We know much more today of what they believed from a 1782 manual of faith and practice for Paulicians called “The Key of Truth.” Though they are often charged with being Gnostics like the Zoroastrian dualism of two gods: one good and one evil, the only reference to Satan in the Key is on page 48 where 2Cor 4:4 mentions that “Satan is the god of this world” blinding the minds of men.

In their catechism they stated “We have believed and know that thou art Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.” The Key frequently described Christ as “the only-born Son.”

They “believe, serve, and worship God the Father, and the Son, mediator and intercessor, and the Holy Spirit, the dispenser of grace to us who believe.” (*The Key of Truth: A Manual of the Paulician Church in Armenia*, F.C. Conybeare: Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1898).

But because they rejected infant baptism they were accused of rejecting all forms of baptism!

Because they opposed the blasphemous Eucharist of the Mass they were accused of denying the true human nature and literal death of Christ on the cross!

Because they rejected the trinity they were condemned for rejecting “the eternity and deity of Christ.” Because these original Protestants chose not to accept this man-made tradition they were seen as “not even Christian at all.” Such mistaken logic prevails still today.

The Paulicians lived on in Italy as the Cathars, the Albigenses in France, the Bogomils in Bulgaria, and the Waldenses in the Piedmont valleys of the vaudes. Like Arius, hardly anything remains of their writings, and nearly all that we know of their teaching and doctrine comes from their heavily biased enemies.

For example, Bernard Gui, recorded in his 1143 “On the Albigenses,” that they regarded themselves as

holding the faith of Jesus “and his gospel as the apostles taught” but they were “despicable heretics” because they denied that the Eucharist contained the actual body of Christ, denied that holy water was really holy and that confession made to priests was useless. Furthermore, they dismissed relics as merely superstitious ploys of Rome that should not be adored nor venerated. But worst of all they believed the Bible should be read in the common language of the people. They were ridiculed for being vegetarians, and accused of being modalistic Monarchianists, Unitarian adoptionists, angelic-Christ Docetists and as all heretics labeled Arians.

In the 800s the Slavic Bogomils (“Friends of God” or “Dear God”) emerged in Bulgaria. Their doctrinal beliefs are also sketchy, but threads of Biblical truth can be found. It is said they believed that God had two sons, Satan and Michael. Satan rebelled and became the god of this world bringing ruin and rebellion to earth. Satan thus became the evil spirit. Michael was sent to earth to become the man Jesus. Satan engineered his crucifixion and Michael then became the Holy Spirit. Satan, they believed, created the Orthodox system of churches, vestments, rites, sacraments, monks and priests to draw men away from God.

Considerable evidence exists in the Bible for identifying Michael as the pre-existent Christ. Both are princes.

Christ is the Prince of peace, Isa 9:6.
Prince of life Acts 3:15
Prince of the kings of earth Rev 1:5
Prince of the host Dan 8:11
Prince of princes Dan 8:25
Messiah the Prince Dan 9:25
Prince of the covenant Dan 11:22
Michael is the great prince Dan 12:1
First of the chief princes Dan 10:13
Michael the archangel Jude 9
Christ shall descend with the voice of the archangel 1Thes4:16.

And Satan is also called a prince.

Satan is the prince of devils Matt 9:34
Prince of this world John 14:30;16:11
Prince of the power of the air Eph 2:2

Piecing together a story that began in heaven, as we have already seen, Scripture describes a conflict between Michael and Satan, the two anointed covering angels who stood in the presence of God (Ex 25:18-20).

Michael was at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb 1:3; 8:1). His God, his Father (Ps 89:26; John 20:17), anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows (Heb 1:9). Michael, whose name means “Who is like God,” was not just an angel, he was the Son of God. Likewise, Jesus was not just a man, but the “Son of the living God” Matt 16:16. He is the “one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” 1Tim 2:5. After he “created all things” (Col 1:16) he became the mediator of all things, the ladder reaching between heaven and earth (Gen 28:12; John 1:51), bridging the great gulf (Luke 16:26) between finite creatures and the infinite God.

Michael was not always an angel, just as Jesus was not always a man. But the Son of God, “being in the form of God...made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant” (Phil 2:6,7), first as Michael the archangel in order to manifest his Father to the angelic host, and then in the fullness of time, Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, the anointed One, the Son of man, that he might also show us the Father (John 14:9,10).

Was Satan also a son of God? Yes, in the book of Job he presents himself before God along with the other sons of God (Job 1:6). But Satan, like the other sons of God, was created from nothing, spoken into existence by the Word of God (Ps 33:6,9; John 1:1,2).

Satan, however, was not always Satan. Before he left his first estate (Jude 6) he was Lucifer, son of the morning (Isa 14:12), the other anointed cherub that covers (Eze 28:14). Yet, he was not content with his position. More than this, he was jealous for Michael’s place with the

Father and the “counsel of peace” that was “between them both” (Zech 13:6). He was “filled with violence” (Eze 28:16) and he began to plot the death of God’s own Son, His *only real* Son whom He loved (Gen 22:2; Mark 12:6) and delighted (Isa 42:1).

Michael, indeed, was the only begotten Son of God, the only Son begotten from the bosom of God Himself (John 1:18) “before all things” (Col 1:17), “before His works of old ...or ever the earth was” he was “brought forth” (Prov 8:22-25).

The Bogomils preserved this truth buried within the Holy Scriptures.

The Waldenses, named after the valleys in which they settled in the Italian alps, are thought to have originated from the disciples of Polycarp who were discharged from him in 120 AD (Peter Allix, *Churches of Piedmont*, 1690 edition, p. 177). They called themselves the Valdese or Vaudois. Because they desired reading the Bible, Peter Waldo is said to have paid two priests to translate several books of Scripture into Gallic, the common language of these people.

From their reading of the Bible they discarded the practice of indulgences, prayers for the dead, the Mass, Eucharist, and infant baptism. And they were called *Sabbatati* because they kept the seventh day Sabbath as taught in the Bible.

But the church was not pleased with this development and forbid them to discuss the Scriptures without authorization by the local clergy. Their “contempt for ecclesiastical power” resulted in their excommunication and banishment from Lyon, France. They retreated to the mountains where they preserved the Bible by making handmade copies. They would hide portions of these Bibles in their clothing and share them with the customers with whom they sold goods in their ventures into the villages.

Anabaptists, Baptists, Mennonites all identify the Waldenses as their spiritual ancestors—rejecting infant baptism, but baptizing by immersion.

THE
CONFESSION OF FAITH,
OF THE CHRISTIANS KNOWN BY THE NAME OF
MENNONITES,
IN THIRTY-THREE ARTICLES;
WITH A SHORT EXTRACT FROM THEIR CATECHISM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,
AND ACCOMPANIED WITH NOTES.

TO WHICH IS ADDED
AN INTRODUCTION.

BY JOSEPH FUNK.

“And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” Eph. 2: 20.

W^{est}chester:

PRINTED BY ROBINSON & HOLLIS.

—1837.—

Mennonites

The Mennonites are followers of Menno Simon, a German reformer who produced his confession of faith in 1659. They trace the origins of their sect to the Waldenses.

The introduction tells of Peter Waldus and his experience in translating the Bible from Latin into French and discovering the “glaring contradictions” between what the scriptures taught and the Roman Church’s doctrine. The reading of God’s Word always brings revival and reformation.

“When the Papists ask us where our religion was before Luther, we generally answer, In the Bible, and we answer well. But, to gratify their taste for tradition and human authority, we may add to this answer, and in the valleys of Piedmont.”

The Mennonite Confession of Faith lists 33 articles, which begin with the unity of God and the Sonship of Jesus Christ.

Though the scripture references are not listed, it is quite evident that each statement is alluding to a corresponding text.

“Article First” continues:

“And this One eternal and true God—the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, consists in a true Father, and a true Son, and a true Holy Ghost. And

besides this God there is none other, neither ever shall be.”

Article “Second” deals with “The Eternal Birth and Godhead of the Son of God, and His Divine Attributes”

“Of the eternal birth and Godhead of the only begotten Son of God, we believe, That the Son of God, **from all eternity, came forth, was born,** and in an ineffable manner **proceeded forth from the true God, his Father;** of the same nature, essence and substance with the Almighty God. A light from the true light. **Truly God from the true God.** Who being in the form of God, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.”

“For in truth it must follow, that he that is begotten, is essentially the same with him whom he was begotten. For, **As the stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands,** and became a great mountain that filled the whole earth, **is of the same substance with the mountain from which it was taken;** so also is the elect precious corner-stone, Jesus Christ, **the only begotten Son of God, the same in his being and substance; co-equal, co-eternal with the Almighty Father, who is the mountain and rock of ages.** Therefore, Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, is to be received and acknowledged, by every true believer, to be equally worthy with God his Father to receive our highest worship, honour, adoration and praise.”

The Mennonite Confession is the only credal statement that is known to recognize the example of Daniel 2 in explaining the inheritance of the divine substance.

Triune Baptism

Matt 28:19 is defended, it is claimed, by the appearance of all three members of the Trinity at the baptism of Christ. Yes, the Father spoke from heaven affirming His Son, and the Father’s Spirit appeared above His Son in the form of a dove.



That “heavenly dove” was an assurance to Jesus of His Father’s power. This visible sign of divine approval was an illustration of how Jesus successfully overcame temptation and was victorious over sin and the devil. He relied totally on His Father’s power and internal abiding presence. He did not use his own divine power. His greatest temptation was to exercise his divine power. Satan, like he did with Eve in Eden, expressed doubt in the words of God which testified only days earlier of Christ’s divine Sonship.

‘If Thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.’

How was he victorious? Jesus said,

“I can of my own self do nothing...I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father” “The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwells in me” “I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak” John 5:30; 14:10; 12:49.

But wasn’t Jesus different than us? Wasn’t he protected from sinning? No. Jesus could have sinned. He faced the same risk just like you and I. That’s why he is our Example.

He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities and was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin. Heb 4:15

He said to Pilate,

‘You could have no power at all against me, except it were given you from above.’ John 19:11

Pilate received all his power from above; so also Jesus received all his power from his Father.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Matt 28:18

For the Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. John 3:35

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him. Acts 10:38

We must overcome sin through the same power as he overcame it.

Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Revelation 14:12

Jesus sends his Spirit, his mind to dwell in us. This is the greatest gift that he can give to us: the experience of his victorious life of submission.

It was the Father who kept Jesus from sinning! And He can keep us from sin as well.

But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil. 2Thess 3:3

It is God’s magnificent demonstration of love in the life of Jesus that constrains us to seek His heart of love. But, in contrast to God’s character of self-sacrificing love, service to others, and humility, the enemy of God thinks only of himself.

Satan has ever sought to exalt himself “above all that is called God, or that is worshiped” 2Thess 2:4. He also desires to exercise his spirit in the minds of men.

The Spirit of God is opposed to this attitude of defiant independence. The spirit of truth is at war with the spirit of error. 1John 4:6 The mind of Satan is at enmity with God. His mind is the mind of self without God.

Both spirits are battling for control of the mind, the soul temple.

“...the god of this world has 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.” 2Cor 4:4

Our minds are the central theater of operations in the great cosmic battle between Christ and Satan. Only as we understand the nature of humanity—both in us and in Christ—and the place of his divinity in his work of salvation, can we participate with him in working out our “own salvation with fear and trembling” and cooperate with him as He works in us “both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Phil 2:12,13.

A critical factor in this understanding is knowing the Father and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. These two are united in working on our behalf. They come together to abide in us. John 14:23. Jesus is our advocate together along with the Father 1Jn 2:1. They both love us. John 15:9; 16:27. And they both send their Spirit (John 15:26; 16:7), their mind (Phil 2:5; 1Cor 2:16) to join with our mind (Eph 4:23; Phil 1:27) that we may be one with them as they are one with each other (John 17:22). Recognizing this Spirit of God, knowing this Spirit of Jesus is vitally important. We *must* know *who* the Spirit is. But it is not necessary for us to know *what* it is or *how* it works.

The Comforter is Christ’s Spirit, his mind, dwelling in us, Christ in you the hope of glory! This is the real truth as it is in Jesus! Eph 4:21. Jesus desires to connect his mind with ours. Instant, 24/7, super broadband connectivity! How truly awesome!



O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Rom 11:33, 34.

Conjecturing *how* this is done, speculating on the divine physics, is pointless. But it is essential for us to know Who is our connection.

We must have the mind of Jesus. It is not enough to just change our existing mind, to simply adjust our thinking. God proposes to give us a new mind programmed with a new spirit, replacing the old mind, taking it completely away.

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them.” Ezekiel 36:26,27

And what happens when the mind of Jesus comes in and replaces ours?

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who...made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant...he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death” Phil 2:5-8

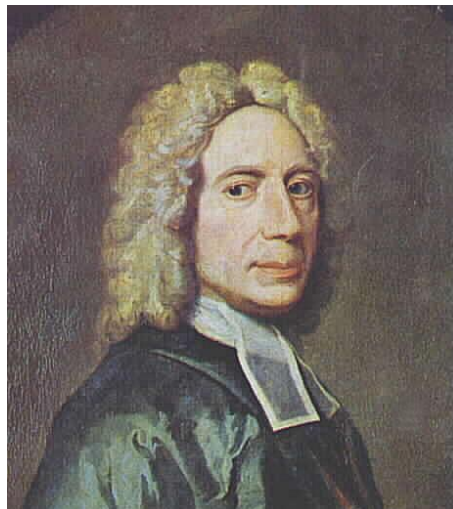
Jesus had no trace of self, not one speck of ambition, self-respect, self-esteem, self-will. He had no agenda, no plans for himself, no path for success other than what would please his Father in every step, every decision, every thought and word. He “emptied himself,” “laid aside,” “made of none effect,” his own divine powers.

He performed all his miracles by the power of God the Father. Therefore, his temptations were as much greater than ours as his divine powers are greater than our human powers.

Then how was he able to live a sinless life? He was “filled with all the fullness of God.” The Father’s mind filled him completely, totally. He was the spittin’ image, the perfect reproduction of his Father in thought and mind and soul. Like Father like Son.

And this is his desire for you and me. He is waiting at the door of our mind for permission to enter. He’s knocking, respecting our wishes. But when invited in, he promises to fully clean our temple “of all unrighteousness” just as he totally cleansed the temple long ago, transforming it from a den of thieves and a place of merchandise to a house of prayer and worship.

Isaac Watts 1674-1748



The author of over 750 hymns wrote a book in 1730 with the catchy title, “The Improvement of THE MIND or, a Supplement to the Art of Logic: containing a variety of REMARKS and RULES for the Attainment and Communication of Useful Knowledge in Religion, in the Sciences, and in Common Life. To which is added DISCOURSE on the EDUCATION of CHILDREN and YOUTH.” But it is his view of God, His Son and His Spirit that is most interesting.

“What is dearer to God the Father than his only Son? And what diviner blessing has he to bestow upon men than his holy Spirit? Yet has he given his Son for us, and by the hands of his Son he confers his blessed Spirit on us. *‘Jesus having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, shed it forth on men.’* Acts ii. 33. (italics his). p. 358.

He ends his book with a prayer described by him as “The Author’s Solemn Address to the Great and Blessed God on a Review of What he

had Written in the Trinitarian Controversy...”

Hast thou not, O Lord God Almighty, hast thou not transacted thy divine and important affairs among men by thy Son Jesus Christ, and by thy holy Spirit?

Watts recognized the Lord God Almighty who is God the Father, Jesus Christ His only Son, and His Holy Spirit. He sincerely wants to know:

Must I not know thee, **the only true God, and Jesus Christ thy Son**, whom thou hast sent, that I may fulfil all my respective duties toward thyself and thy Son, in hope of eternal life? Hath not thy Son himself appealed to thee in his last prayer, that eternal life depends upon this knowledge? And since thou hast made so much use of thy Holy Spirit in our religion, must I not have some knowledge of this thy Spirit also

Isaac struggled to understand the truth about God and His Son.

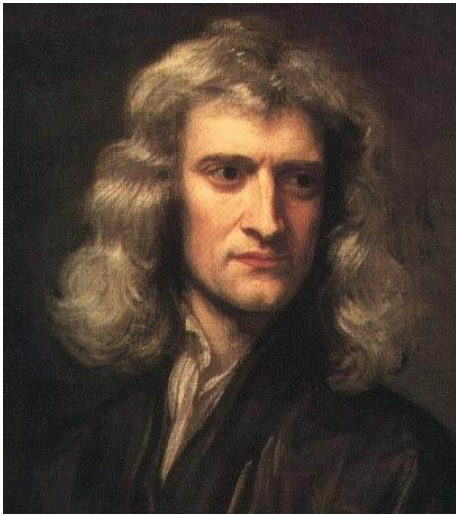
Surely I ought to know the God whom I worship, whether he be one pure and simple being, or whether thou art a threefold deity consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Dear and blessed God, hadst thou been pleased, in any one plain scripture, to have informed me which of the different opinions about the holy Trinity, among the contending parties of christians, had been true, thou knowest with how much zeal, satisfaction, and joy, my unbiased heart would have opened itself to receive and embrace the divine discovery. Hadst thou told me plainly, in any single text, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are three real distinct persons in thy divine nature, I had never suffered myself to be bewildered in so many doubts, nor embarrassed with so many strong fears of assenting to the mere inventions of men...

Isaac desired to find even one text of Scripture that would plainly answer his quest to know “the only true God, and Jesus Christ” His Son. In this he identified it: John 17:3.

Another Isaac, contemporary with Watts, was Isaac Newton.

Isaac Newton 1642-1727



The discoverer of gravity, and optics, inventor of calculus was also deeply religious. His study of the Bible led to his own view of God which he placed in the middle between two extremes: the atheists who were guilty of subtracting from God's truth, and the Trinitarians who he blamed for adding to it. Like other Bible students he was accused of being Arian and Socinian. But unlike the Socinians, Newton believed in Christ's preexistence.

Newton met Samuel Crell in 1726 and was influenced by Crell's conviction that John 1:1 "and the Word was God" was originally "and the Word was *of* God." Newton rejected both the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds but accepted the Apostles' Creed because it most closely conformed to the language of the Bible.

He believed that "only the Father is truly and uniquely God" by quoting 1Cor 8:6.

It is a proper epithete of ye father to be called almighty. For by God almighty we always understand ye Father. Yet this is not to limit the power of ye Son, for he doth what soever he seeth ye Father do; but to acknowledge yet all power is originally in ye Father & that ye son hath no power in him but what derives from ye father for he professes that of himself he can do nothing.

John tells is, In the beginning was the Word, but he doth not tell us that he was begotten before or in the beginning.

Perhaps, Newton, wondered,

he was called the first born of every creature to denote the antemundane generation of his spiritual body.

For decades Newton searched through the annals of church history and concluded that the primitive Christian church had a faith that believed in the One True God. He insisted that the introduction of the unbiblical word *homoousia*, Greek philosophy, and metaphysics corrupted the original primitive Christian teachings.

Newton discovered that 1John 5:7, the *comma Johanneum*, one of the main supports for the Triity was a "textual corruption" introduced into Greek manuscripts only two centuries earlier. He observed, "The human race is prone to mysteries, and holds nothing so holy and perfect as that which cannot be understood...& for that reason to like best what they understand the least." He concluded, "Truth is ever to be found in simplicity, & not in the multiplicity & confusion of things."

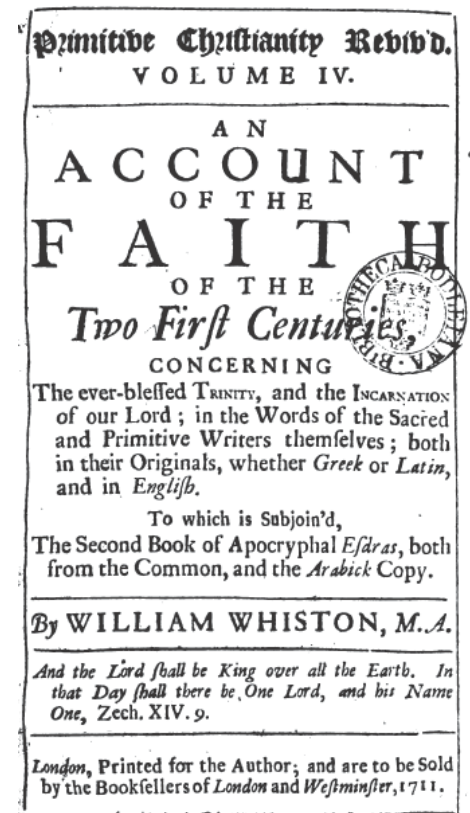
In his 1726 edition of Principia, his famous treatise on gravity and the laws of thermodynamics, Newton expanded on his view of the One True God in a section called the General Scholium. By analogy he compared the "most beautiful System of the Sun, Planets, and Comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful being."

"**This Being governs all things**, not as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all: And on account of his dominion he is wont to be called Lord God παντοκράτωρ, or *Universal Ruler*. For *God* is a relative word, and has a respect to servants..." (italics his).

To Newton, God was the Supreme Ruler of the cosmos because of his universal dominion—"God of heaven and earth." Likewise, this concept of God as a relative term in his mind accounted for other usages of "God" and "god" in Scripture. He noted that Christ applied Psalm 82:6 to human rulers in John 10:34 when accused of making himself God.

"And in this sense Princes are called *Gods*, *Psal.* lxxxii. ver. 6; and *John* x. ver. 35. And *Moses* is called a *God* to his brother *Aaron*, and a *God* to *Pharaoh* (*Exod.* iv. ver. 16; and vii. ver. 1 [*sic*; 8])"

Newton reasoned that "God the Father" was "King of kings, Lord of the dominant, Lord of hosts, God of gods, and finally **God and head of Christ himself**. [1Cor 11:3] It is said, he [Christ] is himself King of kings and Lord of lords, head of all principality and power, God of all things, or all beings, in this blessed age, seeing that he is **lifted up by God himself over all things.**"



William Whiston 1667-1752

Whiston is best known for his translation of the works of Josephus and as the assistant to Sir Isaac Newton. His work shown here is a good collection of the actual source documents available in 1711. He begins by writing:

ARTICLE I.

There is but One, Supreme, Living, Eternal, Infinite, Omniscient, Omnipotent and Invisible God; the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; The Origin of all Beings, and the Creator of all Creatures.

Whiston clearly states that it is the One Supreme God who is the Father, the Origin of all Beings. As we did, he lists a multitude of texts which show that God is the Father of Jesus who is the Son of God.

In commenting on 1John 5:20 he writes, “I interpret this Verse, whether as commonly read, or whether as here from the *Alexandrian* and sixteen other Copies, not of the *Son*, but of the *Father*, that *He* and none else is the *true God* of the Christians, because, (1.) This is the constant, original, primitive Style of the Church; that the *Father alone is the true God*; ... (2.) The Apostle is not here speaking of the *Dignity of the Son of God*, but cautioning against the Worship of False Gods; And certainly the *true God* of the Christians, in opposition to the *False Gods* of the Heathen, can be no other than *God the Father*. (3.) The Son has another Title here than the *true God*: I mean, *He that is true*, and so gives us a true and sure discovery of the Father, the *only true God*.” p. 20, 21 [italics his].

Whiston makes the observation that “Almighty is an Epithet only belonging to God the Father” and provides the following texts in support: 2Cor 6:18; Rev 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:14; 19:6; 21:22.



John Gill 1697-1771

The English Baptist-Calvinist, John Gill said in his commentary on Hebrews discussing chapter 1 verse 5:

“Christ is the Son of God, not by Creation, nor by adoption, nor by office, but by nature; he is the true,

proper, natural, and eternal Son of God; and as such is owned and declared by Jehovah the Father, in these words; the foundation of which relation lies in the begetting of him”

William Sherlock, 1690

“This Power the Son always had as **begotten of his Father, from all Eternity**, and One God with him... And **therefore now it is given him to have Life in himself**, as the Father hath Life in himself [John 5:26], as **the Original Fountain of all Life by whom the Son himself lives**; [John 6:57] **all Life is derived from God**, either by eternal Generation, or Procession, or Creation; and thus Christ hath Life in himself also, in the new Creation he is the Fountain of Life.” William Sherlock, *A Vindication of the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity*, pp. 171, 172, 1690

John Fletcher, 1788

Fletcher appealed to inheritance as the basis for the Son’s equality.

“From this common, equal, and full participation of the highest titles, and most distinguishing perfections of the Supreme Being, it follows, that the Son (with respect to *Deity*) is as perfectly equal to the Father, though **all the Son’s Deity came from his Divine Father**; as Isaac (with respect to *humanity*) was equal to Abraham, though all the humanity of Isaac came from his *human* parent.” John Fletcher, *An Expostulatory Letter to the Rev. Dr. Priestley*, Chp. 3, 1788

Zechariah 6:12 speaks of the Father and Son, a Godhead of two, who share the throne of heaven.

Behold, the man
whose name is **the Branch**:
And He shall **grow up out of His place**;
And He shall **build the temple** of Jehovah...
And He shall **bear the glory**,
And shall sit and **rule upon His throne**;
And He shall be a **priest upon His throne**;
And **the counsel of peace shall be between Them both**.

Through the 18th century we have seen a plain and consistent continuity of belief in the begotten Son of God. The Son received all things from the Father: His eternal life and spirit, divine character, His own name, creative power, authority, glory and honor. He is not a son by creation or adoption, but a Son begotten.

This Satan would seek to hide and obscure. Long before his human birth in Bethlehem, rebellious angels conspired to obscure this fact. We can clearly see how this actually transpired *twice*.

After Peter’s confession of faith in the Son of the living God, “grievous wolves” came in and changed the faith once delivered to the saints into a mystical union of persons within one being. Others obscured the fact of the divinely begotten Son by recognizing only his human birth. By the 4th century the new doctrines of Modalism and Trinitarianism were fully developed. But following the Reformation, the truth of God’s Fatherhood and Christ’s Sonship was rediscovered by a study of God’s Word.

John 5:26 and 1Timothy 6:15,16 were key texts that emerged from this study. “For as the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in himself.” And “...Jesus Christ which in his times he shall show the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man has seen, nor can see.”

The blessed and only Potentate refers to the Father. “No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared (shown) him.” John 1:18. “Not that any man has seen the Father, save he which is of (from) God, he has seen the Father.” John 6:46. It is the Father, “the only true God” John 17:3, who has life in Himself and He has given this same self-existent life to His Son that he may have self-existent life in himself.

Only the Father, the Spring and the Fountain of life, has power over life. But Christ said that He could lay down His life (*psuchen*, soul) and take it again with his Father's permission. The issue, however, is not one of ability or power but authority which, Jesus says, comes from His Father.

John 10:17

Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life [*psuchen*, soul] that I might take [*labo* Strong's #2983, receive, get, accept] it again

Notice the Greek word *labo* translated "I take" in this verse. Now compare the word translated "take" in the next verse:

John 10:18

No man **takes** [*airen* Strong's #142] it from me, but I lay it down of myself I have power [*ezonsian* authority, liberty, privilege, right] to lay it [My soul] down, and I have power [*ezonsian* authority] to **take** [*labein* Strong's #2983 receive, get] it again. This commandment have I **received** [*elabon* Strong's #2983] of my Father

Jesus said "no man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself." Notice that he did not say "no man gives it to me, I take it again all by myself."

The word "take" has two Greek forms in this text. When Jesus says "No man **takes** it from me" the Greek word is Strong's #142 *airo* which is translated take up or take away. It is a **unilateral action**; a removal by one party without any associated transfer from another party.

Examples of this in John's gospel are:

John 1:29 the Lamb of God which takes [*airo*] away the sins of the world

John 2:10 Take [*airo*] these things away! Make not my Father's house a den of thieves

John 5:8 Rise, take up [*airo*] thy bed and walk

John 11:39 Take away [*airo*] the stone

John 20:13 They have taken away [*airo*] my Lord

But when He says He will "take it again" John uses a different Greek word, Strong's #2983 *labo*, *labein*, *elabon*. Various forms of *lambano* which is translated as either take or receive because it is a **reciprocal action**. There is a transfer of something from a giver to a receiver.

For example,

Matt 26:26 Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them saying, "Take, eat..." In taking the bread, they received it.

Then also *lambano* is translated as "receive" 133 times in the New Testament.

John 1:12 As many as **received** him, to them **gave** He power to become the sons of God

John 3:27 A man can **receive** nothing except it be **given** him from heaven

John 16:24 Ask and you shall **receive**

John 20:22 Jesus **breathed** on them and said, "**Receive** the Holy Spirit"

Jesus gives power and many receive it.

Heaven gives and man receives.

Jesus gave them his Spirit and they received it.

Lambano is also translated 106 times as take. **Each time a take occurs, a receive happens as well.** This same Greek word is used in John 10:18 when Jesus said He "received" this commandment from His Father who "gave" it to Him. He could have said, "I take this command, this responsibility, as my Father gives it."

The *taking* of *lambano* is always the result of *receiving* that which is given. It's a reciprocal action.

If we translate the reciprocal "take-receive" *lambano* as the unilateral "take" of *airo*, then this verse contra-

dicts the over two dozen verses which state that God the Father raised Jesus.

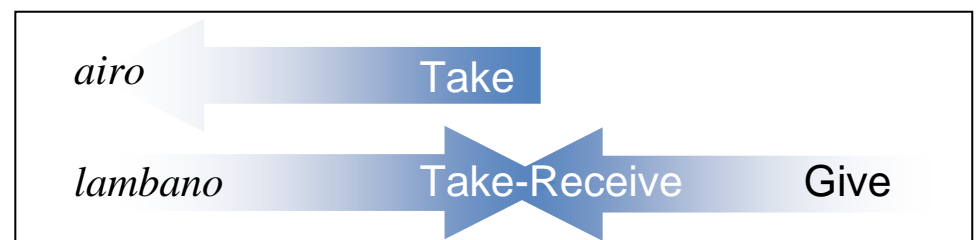
If we translate *lambano* as a reciprocal "take and receive", then this verse agrees with all these verses and only conflicts with the two other verses that *seem* to suggest Jesus raised Himself.

In harmony with John 5:26, the Son has authority to receive again the life His Father gave Him. The literal Son of God naturally and innately has the very same kind of self-existent life that his Father has.

God is an individual divine Being, a personal God who has a divine Son, the express image of His person. The idea of a consubstantial hypostatic union of three co-equal hypostases—something between a person and a personality—is in fact a non-entity.



As the 19th century opened there was an explosion of interest in the begotten Son of God as the solution to both the *reason* for Christ's divinity and the *reality* of the one true God. Harmony with an abundance of Scripture was realized in this original truth.



Thomas Jefferson

A remarkable development occurred in America at the beginning of the 19th century. A convergence of liberty, freshly spawned from the American Revolution, gave rise to a new sense of independent thought and individual conscience, in not only matters of political resolve but also in personal religious conviction.



March 4, 1801 Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, Architect, Lawyer, and Inventor, became the third president of the United States. Jefferson wrote his own version of the Gospel which he titled, *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth*, but which is better known as the *Jefferson Bible*. After his second term of office, he wrote many letters expressing his religious views.

"It is too late in the day for men of sincerity to pretend they believe in the Platonic mysticisms that three are one, and one is three; and yet that the one is not three, and the three are not one; to divide mankind by a single letter into opoysians and opotysians. But this constitutes the craft, the power and the profit of the priests." Letter to John Adams 1813

To Van der Kemp in 1820 he wrote,

"The genuine and simple religion of Jesus will one day be restored: such as it was preached and practised by himself. Very soon after his death it became muffled up in mysteries, and has been

ever since kept in concealment from the vulgar [common] eye."

Two years later he confided to Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse,

"The doctrines of Jesus are simple, and tend all to the happiness of man.

1. That there is one only God, and he all perfect.
2. That there is a future state of rewards and punishments.
3. That to love God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself, is the sum of religion.

These are the great points on which he endeavored to reform the religion of the Jews. But compare with these the demoralizing dogmas of Calvin.

1. That there are three Gods.
2. That good works, or the love of our neighbor, are nothing.
- 3 That faith is everything, and the more incomprehensible the proposition, the more merit in its faith.
4. That reason in religion is of unlawful use.
5. That God, from the beginning, elected certain individuals to be saved, and certain others to be damned; and that no crimes of the former can damn them; no virtues of the latter save.

Now, which of these is the true and charitable Christian? He who believes and acts on the simple doctrines of Jesus? Or the impious dogmatists, as Athanasius and Calvin?"

He then made a bold prediction:

"I rejoice that in this blessed country of free inquiry and belief, which has surrendered its creed and conscience to neither kings nor priests, the genuine doctrine of one only God is reviving, and I trust that there is not a young man now living in the United States who will not die an Unitarian."

It is clear that Jefferson rejected the Triitarian creeds in favor of the Unitarian position. His letter to James Smith in 1822 was...

...to express my gratification with your efforts for the revival of primitive Christianity in your quarter.

No historical fact is better established, than that the doctrine of one God, pure and uncompounded, was that

of the early ages of Christianity; and was among the efficacious doctrines which gave it triumph over the polytheism of the ancients, sickened with the absurdities of their own theology. Nor was the unity of the Supreme Being ousted from the Christian creed by the force of reason, but by the sword of civil government, wielded at the will of the fanatic Athanasius. The hocus-pocus phantasm of a God like another Cerberus, with one body and three heads, had its birth and growth in the blood of thousands and thousands of martyrs. And a strong proof of the solidity of the primitive faith, is its restoration, as soon as a nation arises which vindicates to itself the freedom of religious opinion, and its external divorce from the civil authority.

The pure and simple unity of the Creator of the universe, is now all but ascendant in the Eastern States; it is dawning in the West, and advancing towards the South; and I confidently expect that the present generation will see Unitarianism become the general religion of the United States. The Eastern presses are giving us many excellent pieces on the subject, and Priestley's learned writings on it are, or should be, in every hand. In fact, the Athanasian paradox that one is three, and three but one, is so incomprehensible to the human mind, that no candid man can say he has any idea of it, and how can he believe what presents no idea? He who thinks he does, only deceives himself. He proves, also, that man, once surrendering his reason, has no remaining guard against absurdities the most monstrous, and like a ship without a rudder, is the sport of every wind. With such persons gullibility which they call faith, takes the helm from the hand of reason, and the mind becomes a wreck.

I write with freedom, because while I claim a right to believe in one God, if so my reason tells me, I yield as freely to others that of believing in three.

What evidence did Jefferson have that gave him such confidence that "the genuine doctrine of the one only God" was reviving? What was happening in the east, west, and south? History indicates that it was the phenomenal growth of a group who simply called themselves Christians.

UNITARIANISM EXHIBITED

IN ITS ACTUAL CONDITION ;

CONSISTING OF

ESSAYS BY SEVERAL UNITARIAN MINISTERS AND OTHERS ;

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRINCIPLES

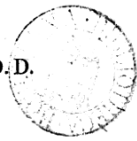
OF

CHRISTIAN ANTI-TRINITARIANISM

IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD.

EDITED BY THE

REV. J. R. BEARD, D.D.



'This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.' John xvii, 3.

'To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.' 1 Cor. viii, 6.

LONDON :

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO., AVE MARIA LANE.

1846.

Beginning on page 54 of this book, published in 1846, is a chapter on the "Christian Connexion in the United States." This group is described as "a very considerable body of religionists" "who, rejecting all names, appellations and badges of distinctive party among the followers of Christ, simply call themselves CHRISTIANS."

They were composed of three groups which arose simultaneously in the East, the West and the South just as Jefferson observed. They had no prior contact or communication with each other, but upon learning of the other's existence and through correspondence learned that they all held to the same doctrinal convictions.

The first group separated from the North Carolina Episcopal Methodists in 1793. At first they called themselves Republican Methodists, but soon resolved to be known only as Christians, "to acknowledge no head over the church but Christ and no creed or discipline but the Bible."

Only a few months later, Albert Jones a Baptist in Hartford, Vermont, was convinced that "sectarian names and human creeds" should be abandoned and determined to make "the Bible the only source from whence he drew the doctrine he taught." In September, 1800 he and 25 others formed a church upholding these principles. Within a few years churches sprung up throughout New England.

At the same time, a revival was sweeping the Presbyterians of Kentucky and Tennessee in 1800 and 1801. Barton Stone and several other members withdrew from the Kentucky synod and agreed to "take the Holy Scriptures as their only written rule of faith and practice." At first they took the name "Springfield Presbytery" but by 1803

they too decided to be known only as Christians. They replaced infant baptism with the "believers baptism by immersion" and soon spread "with remarkable rapidity" through all the western states.

Within the space of eight years the three branches had arisen on their own: "The branch at the south from the Methodists; the branch at the north from the Baptists; and the one at the west from the Presbyterians...Probably no other religious body ever had a similar origin."

The article detailed the amazing similarity of beliefs which they shared in common.

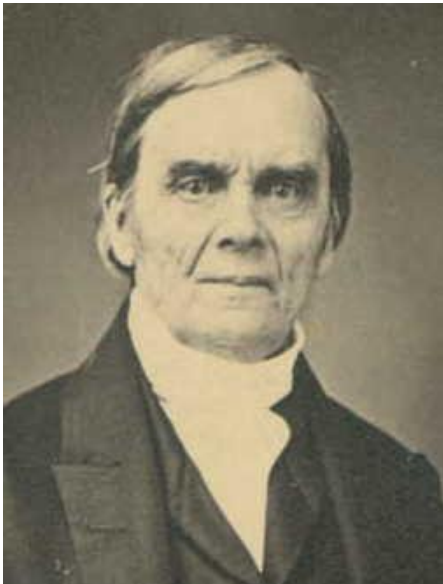
The adopting of the Holy Scriptures as their only system of faith, has led them to the study of shaping their belief by the language of the sacred oracles. A doctrine, which cannot be expressed in the language of inspiration, they do not hold themselves obligated to believe. Hence, with very few exceptions, they are not Trinitarians, averring that they

can neither find the word nor the doctrine in the Bible. They believe 'the Lord our Jehovah is *one* Lord,' and purely *one*. That 'Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God;' that the Holy Ghost is that divine unction with which our Saviour was anointed, (Acts x. 38,) the effusion that was poured out on the day of Pentecost; and that it is a divine emanation of God, by which he exerts an energy or influence on rational minds. While they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, they are not Socinians or Humanitarians [belief that Christ had no pre-existence, was only born a human and then given divinity]. Their prevailing belief is that Jesus Christ existed with the Father before all worlds."

"Jesus Christ is the Son of God and existed with the Father before all worlds"

Although the Christians do not contend for entire uniformity in belief, yet in addition to the foregoing, nearly, if not quite all of them, would agree in the following sentiments: 1. That God is the rightful arbiter of the universe; the source and foundation of all good. 2. That all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. 2. That with God there is forgiveness; but that sincere repentance and reformation are indispensable to the forgiveness of sins. 4. That man is constituted a free moral agent, and made capable of obeying the gospel. 5. That through the agency of the Holy Spirit, souls, in the use of means, are converted, regenerated, and made new creatures. 6. That Christ was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; that through his example, doctrine, death, resurrection and intercession, he has made salvation possible to everyone, and is the only Saviour of lost sinners.

Their rapid growth is seen in the numbers they could account for as of 1844: 1500 churches with preachers, communicants about 325,000, and it was estimated that probably not less than 500,000 in America had adopted their general views—even Jefferson.



Henry Grew (1781-1862)

Henry had a significant impact on the early American Advent Movement. His name appears in several of the Millerite and Adventist publications.

He is known for his rejection of a number of doctrines accepted by the mainstream churches of his time. From his study of the Bible he concluded that the doctrines of baptism by sprinkling, the Trinity, immortality of the soul and eternal hell fire could not be supported by Scripture. These were the same beliefs discarded by the Adventist pioneers of his time.

Though he arrived from England in the United States as a Congregationalist, his convictions on baptism by immersion led him to join Roger Williams' Baptist church of Providence, Rhode Island, later to become pastor of the First Baptist church of Harford, Connecticut in 1807.

Henry left the Baptist communion because of his further discoveries in the study of the Bible. He found Him who is altogether lovely, the Son of God, and took his place between Unitarians and Trinitarians by accepting the literal and divine Son of God, begotten before all things. With a gentle yet persuasive manner he appeals to those who differ from his strongly supported biblical understanding of Christ's divine Sonship.

AN
EXAMINATION
OF
THE DIVINE TESTIMONY
CONCERNING THE CHARACTER
OF THE
SON OF GOD.

BY HENRY GREW,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

Christian brother; can you open your bible and read, God is three; or that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are one God; or any words of equivalent import? Even the interpolation of 1Jo 5:7, does not affirm that the three are one God. What do we read in the Word of the Lord on this important subject? "Hear, O Israel! The LORD our God is ONE LORD." De 6:4. "God is ONE." Ga 3:20. "There is but one God, the Father." 1Co 8:6.

What is the testimony of "The faithful Witness" of the Truth? Addressing his "Father," Joh 17:1-3, he plainly and positively declares THE FATHER TO BE "THE ONLY TRUE GOD." You believe that the Father is one person. If then you believe that "the only true God" is three persons, does not your faith stand in "the wisdom of men," which denies the testimony of Jesus Christ, that ONE person is "the ONLY true God?" Please to consider the testimony of the inspired apostle, 1Co 8:6. It is not only that "there is but one God," but that this one God is "THE FATHER." He plainly distinguishes the Father as the "one God" "of whom are all things." The Father the PRINCIPAL, the Son the AGENT. Now behold the harmony of divine truth. "God created all things BY Jesus Christ." Eph 3:9. "BY whom also he made the worlds." Heb 1:2. All his works of love and power, were what "God did BY him." Ac 2:22. "God our Saviour" SAVES US BY, or "through, Jesus Christ our Saviour." Tit 3:4-6. He "shall raise us up also (from the grave) BY Jesus." 2Co

4:14. "God will judge the world in righteousness BY" him. Ac 17:31. All this the Saviour confirms in his own declaration, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Joh 6:38. The humanity did not come down from heaven. The divine and "only begotten Son of God" came down, and took the body "prepared" for him. Heb 10:5. Does not this prove the inferiority of his highest nature to the supreme God? Does not the supreme God seek to do the will of another rather than his own?

He seemed to have no reluctance to use terms like "created" and "inferior," which led some to charge him with presenting a "dwarfed" view of Christ. But Grew also exalted the Son of God to full equality with the Father because he was begotten from the Father and received all things from Him. He was a literal Son who derived his Deity and Godhood by inheritance. This assures that the Son has the exact same divine nature as the Father since he proceeded directly from God. But his Baptist friends considered this "inferior" to their conception of an assumed co-equal, co-eternal independent hypostasis.

It plainly appears from 1Co 2:11, that "the Spirit of God" is no more a distinct person from God, than the spirit of a man is a distinct person from the man. It would be an anomaly of a most extraordinary character; if there was an infinite intelligent person in the universe, to whom no prophet, priest, apostle, or saint of the sacred Scriptures, ever offered any direct prayer or praise See the true doxology, Re 5:13.

A friend who wrote his obituary said, "His was no common life, and he will receive no common reward. Such meekness both in public and private life, combined with such zeal for what he deemed the truth, is seldom seen. Never has the writer witnessed a brighter example of that wisdom which cometh from above, pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

Barton W. Stone, 1772-1844



Barton Stone led the Kentucky Christian Connexion revival of 1801 with an estimated 20,000 attending.

“As man, we see no steps of humiliation in Jesus—he was born in a low state—lived and died the same; therefore as man, he never descended from a high state or condition to a low one.

But view him as the Son of God, how astonishing the stoop! The Son of God! **the first begotten of the Father--born of him in the ages of eternity, before time was born or measured** by revolving spheres — before creation lived.—the Son of God! in the bosom of the Father, in immeasurable bliss.—The Son of God! by whom were made the innumerable worlds that bespangle the firmament--by whom were made all the happy orders of angels, principalities and powers, that blaze around the throne of God—that bow and worship at the feet of their maker, and from whose tongues roll ceaseless praise.—The Son of God! at whose smiles his holy creation is transported, at whose frowns his enemies tremble. The Son of God! enthroned at the right hand of the Father—behold the Son of God! a helpless, weeping babe in Bethlehem—wading thro' seas of distress through life, hated, insulted, persecuted by the poor creatures of his power, and objects of his love; view the Son of God, suffering, bleeding, dying on the cross. All nature shuddered at the sight. It is not a mere man that suffers and dies: it is the Son of God! Under the power of death, he lies in Joseph's tomb. Here is humiliation! a theme of astonishment and eternal praise.” *The Works of Elder B.W. Stone*, Vol. 1, 2nd Edition, 1859, p. 72,73.

Matthew Henry, 1806

Henry, noted for his Bible Commentary which is still frequently referenced, also recognized God as the Son's origin in his discussion of John 8:42:

“He was the Son of God; I **proceeded forth** from God, *exelthon*; this means his divine excellence, or **origin from the Father**, by the communication of the divine essence” Matthew Henry, *An exposition of all the books of the Old and New Testaments* vol. 4 1806, p. 569

Abner Jones, 1829

“Light proceeded forth and came from the sun, and is essentially of the same nature and united with it. So **Christ proceeded forth from the substance of the Father, and is of the same divine nature with his Father** and essentially united with Him in creation, providence and grace.” *Christian Repository*, volume 1, pub. Church of the United Brethren in Christ (1800-1889) May, 1829 Vol 1. No. 5 “Principles, No. 1” by Abner Jones, p. 131.

William Kincade, 1829

“We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be, that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many) 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” 1Cor 8:4-6

This is like saying:

“There is but one President in this country, for though there be that are called presidents, whether in companies or corporations (as there are in an inferior sense, presidents many, and secretaries many,) but to us Americans there is but one President from whom all executive power originates, and one Secretary of State, by whom the whole department of State is regulated”

This makes it clear that the Secretary is not the chief ruler, but his power is derived from the President; and certainly no one would gather from such statements that our government is composed of a triumvirate of three persons in one executive.

God the Father is the prime source of all things; Christ is the instrumental cause of creation and redemption

“For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” 1 Tim 2:5

The Father and Son are two distinct beings: the Father is God, Christ is the man. If Jesus is also supreme God, he cannot be the Mediator between God and men.” “...the Mediator is ten thousand times greater than all the men on earth and all the angels in heaven, and the next greatest being in the universe to God the Father; and the scripture informs me, that all power in heaven and earth is given to him, and that he is able to save to the uttermost. I can feel no hesitation in trusting my soul to his care.” William Kincade, *The Bible Doctrine of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Atonement, Faith, and Election; to which is prefixed some thoughts on Natural Theology and the Truth of Revelation*, New York, 1829.

Church of England, 1846

Everywhere one turned, the begotten Son was given as the explanation of his deity.

“what is meant by styling Christ, God; that is, we declare that he is **God the Son from God the Father**, truly and verily God, as we conceive the Father to be... dean Vincent, quoted in bishop Mant's “Prayer-book,” p. 338” *The Church of England Magazine*, Vol. 20 1846, p. 126.

Samuel Minton, 1847

Minton also commented on John 16:30 where the disciples repeat what Jesus had just said to prove that they really did understand what *exelthon* meant.

“The Apostles are here said to believe two things; 1st, that Jesus “**came out from**” God; and 2ndly, that he was sent by God.” Samuel Minton, *The Pre-Existence of Christ*, Lecture XI, p. 140, 1847.

Henry Solly, 1861

“In the words ‘proceeded forth,’ *exelthon*, something **more** certainly appears to be implied **than** that our Lord had **merely** received a **commission** from God in the same way as Moses or John the Baptist received it. If he had intended us to understand merely that Christ was divinely commissioned, there were several words quite fit for such a meaning, without taking one that

implies a great deal more.” *The Doctrine of atonement by the Son of God*, Henry Solly, 1861, pp. 45, 46.

James Springer White, 1821-1881

Early founder of the Seventh-day Adventists, echoed the same thought:

THE Father and the Son were one in man's creation, and in his redemption. **Said the Father to the Son**, “Let us make man in our image.” James White, “*The Law and the Gospel*” International Tract Society, Life Incidents, 1868

The Father is the greatest in that he is first. The Son is next in authority because he has been given all things. *Review & Herald*, Jan 4, 1881.

R.F. Cottrell, 1869

Cottrell made the following confession of the begotten Son in 1869:

“I believe all that the Scriptures say of him. If the testimony represents him as being in glory with the Father before the world was,

I believe it.

If it is said that he was in the beginning with God, that he was God, that all things were made by him and for him, and that without him was not anything made that was made,

I believe it.

If the Scriptures say he is the Son of God,

I believe it.

**If it is declared
that the Father sent
his Son into the World,
I believe he had
a Son to send.**

If the testimony says he is the beginning of the creation of God,

I believe it.

If he is said to be the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person,

I believe it.

And when Jesus says, ‘I and my Father are one,’

I believe it;

and when he says, ‘My Father is greater than I,’

I believe that too;

it is the word of the Son of God, and besides this it is perfectly reasonable and seemingly self-evident.”

“If I be asked how I believe the Father and Son are one, I reply, **They are one in a sense not contrary to sense.** If the ‘and’ in the sentence means anything, **the Father and the Son are two beings.** They are one in the same sense in which Jesus prayed that his disciples might be one.” R.F. Cottrell *Review & Herald*, June 1, 1869

Dudley M. Canright, 1867

Similar to the Mennonite concept of the Stone inheriting the attributes of the Mountain, Canright made a distinction between begotten and created.

“Jesus Christ was **begotten of the Father's own substance.** He was **not created out of material** as the angels and other creatures were. He is **truly and emphatically the ‘Son of God,’** the same as I am the son of my father.” D.M. Canright, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 18, 1867

E.J. Waggoner, 1889

A physician, author, and editor wrote,

“In arguing the **perfect equality of the Father and the Son**, and the fact that **Christ is in very nature God**, we do not design to be understood as teaching that the Father was not before the Son.”

In other words, “we teach that the Father was before the Son.”

“Christ is the Son of God. While both are of the same nature, **the Father is first in point of time.** He is also **greater in that he had no beginning**, while **Christ's personality had a beginning.**” *Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, Oct. 1, 1889.

After quoting 1Cor 8:6 he wrote,

“**All things proceed ultimately from God, the Father; even Christ Himself proceeded and came forth from the Father**, but it has pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell...We know that Christ ‘**proceeded forth and came from God**’ (John 8:42), but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man.” p. 9; also *The Present Truth*, Jan. 9, 1896.

To Waggoner, the Father and Son are two separate identities, accepted as a real father and son because the Bible describes them that way.

The message of Scripture is that the Son of God was born in eternity, coming out of God, his Father, inheriting His life, His authority, His power and His name—His character.

We must make a clear distinction between created and begotten. A son begotten inherits his Father's nature; a created son does not.

R.A. Underwood, 1889

Underwood attended lectures given by Waggoner the year before and shared the same convictions.

“First, we will consider Christ and his work by viewing him as **the only being** delegated to represent the eternal Father in *name, in creating the worlds, and in giving the law*”

“**For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son** to have life in himself.” John 5:26. ...shows clearly that **the Son of God received his life, and all his mighty creative power as a gift from the Father.**”

“The apostle Paul contrasts Christ with the angels, as follows: “Being *made* so much better than the angels, as he hath by *inheritance* obtained a more excellent name than they.” Heb. 1:4. The inheritance of Christ from God the Father was such as no other being in the universe received. God the Father delegated to the “beginning of the creation,” “the first-born of every creature,” his own *name*, and his own *almighty, creative, life-giving power*. We are in ignorance of when this was done. We only know that it was **in the eternity of the past; before the worlds and all that in them is, were created.**” *Review & Herald* Aug 6, Sept 17, 1889.

Underwood accepted the inherent divinity of Jesus Christ because he was the Son of God, the image of the invisible God. There are many texts which prove the divinity of Christ:

Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 50:3; Titus 2:13,14
everlasting Father, mighty God
Heb 1:7,8 Father calls the Son God

Ex 3:2; 23:20,21; 1 Thess. 4:16 Christ is called the angel of God's presence, and the Archangel.

Heb 1:1,2 God made worlds by his Son

Eph. 3:9 God created all things by him

Col 1:14-17 He is before all things

John 1:1-3 In the beginning the Word was with God and was God

The Son's title is God not Son, but his nature is as truly God as he is truly a Son. "The beginning" was the creation of heaven and earth. Christ is equal with the Father because he was born of God, and the Son inherits all things from the Father.

Unitarians claimed that the Son of God was only the Son of man—nothing but a man, who began his existence at his birth in Bethlehem some two thousand years ago. Trinitarians insist that he is the eternal God Himself, the same being as the Father. But those who held to the literal Father and Son maintained that the truth was between these two extremes.

This was a constant struggle for the begotten Son believers. The Son is not the Father yet has the same divine nature, the same eternal immortality, the same authority as the Father.

Alonzo T. Jones, 1885

Co-editor with E.J. Waggoner, Jones made logical and clear presentations.

"In the epistle to Titus, first chapter, verses one and two, we read:—Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of **the truth** which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, **which God, that cannot lie, promised** before the world began.

God cannot lie. The same thought is brought out in Heb 6:17, 18:—Wherein **God**, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise **the immutability of his counsel**, confirmed it by an oath: that **by two immutable things**, in which it was **impossible for God to lie**, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to **lay hold upon the hope** set before us. It is impossible for God to lie. God cannot lie. Everything depends upon his word; and being a **God of truth**, and **Jesus Christ the truth, the spirit of truth**, God cannot

lie. That is to say, **God is infallible**, and God's word therefore is **an infallible word. He cannot lie.** But that **word is also the word of Jesus Christ**, and he, **equally with the Father, is infallible.** So this word is **the infallible word of the infallible God**, given to us through **the infallible Son, Jesus Christ.**" A.T. Jones, *General Conference Bulletin* Feb 24, 1895 p. 319

Christ is "the spirit of truth" and the Father is "Him that is true" 1John 5:20. Therefore God swears by only *two* immutable things: Himself, the Father, and the Son. Jesus said the same thing in John 8:17, 18: "the witness of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me bears witness of me." Why not the Spirit? Because:

"Christ is the one through whom the Father is reflected to the whole universe." "He alone could reflect the Father in His fullness, because **His goings forth have been from the days of eternity**, and as it says **in the eighth of Proverbs, 'I was with him, as one brought up with him.'** He was **one of God, equal with God and His nature is the nature of God.**" **"In Christ God is manifested to the angels and reflected to men"** *ibid.*

Christ, the Son of God, in his role as Mediator to the angels, was the archangel Michael—one who is like God. Though he appeared to the angelic host in angelic form, as commander of the angels, he was like God because he was God in nature. Then, in the fullness of time the Son of God became the Son of man.

There is the Father, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, of such transcendent glory, of such all-consuming brightness of holiness, that no man could look upon Him and live. But the Father wants us to look upon Him and live. Therefore the **only begotten of the Father** yielded Himself freely as the gift and became ourselves in human flesh that the Father in Him might so veil His consuming glory and the rays of His brightness, that we might look and live. And when we look there and live, that bright, shining glory from

the face of Jesus Christ shines into our hearts and is reflected to the world."

"He who was born in the form of God took the form of man. In the flesh he was all the while as God, but he did not appear as God." "He divested himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of man." *ibid.*

The birth here described is the divine birth of the Son of God in eternity. He then relinquished the glories of his divinity and took the form of man, born a second time in Bethlehem as the Son of man.

He who had been born of the Spirit, was afterward born of the flesh—in order that we who have already been born of the flesh, may by his grace and the power of the same Spirit, be born of the Spirit—that is, every member of this divine-human family is **twice born.**" *Review & Herald* March 17, 1896.

"Jesus Christ was born again. He came from heaven, **God's first-born**, to the earth, and was **born again.**

He, the sinless one, was made to be sin, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

He, the living one, the prince and author of life, died that we might live. He whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity, **the first-born of God, was born again**, in order that we might be born again.

He was born again, from the world of righteousness into the world of sin; that we might be born again, from the world of sin into the world of righteousness. **He was born again**, and was made partaker of the human nature, that we might be born again, and so made partakers of the divine nature.

He was born again, unto earth, unto sin, and unto man, that we might be born again unto heaven, unto righteousness, and unto God." *Review & Herald* August 1, 1899.

He is both the literal begotten Son of God, born in eternity of his Father's Spirit, and the Son of man born of the flesh.

"Christ was twice born—once in eternity, the only begotten of the Father, and again here in the flesh, thus uniting the divine with the human

in that second birth” *Review & Herald* April 14, 1896

“Christ by his spirit dwells in the inner life--the very life that Christ lived himself...the resurrection life, the life of victory.” *Review & Herald*, April 21, 1896

This was the prevailing belief among 19th century Adventists in exalting the literal begotten Son of God who proceeded from and came out of the eternal Father before the angels or anything else was created, having the same self-existent life, and sharing the same eternal Spirit, and given the same authority, dignity, power and divine perfection of his Father.

Ellen White, -1915

Prolific author, prophetess, and principle founder of the Seventh-day Adventist church, Ellen White wrote extensively on the begotten nature of the Son of God.

“Says the true Witness, **the only Begotten of the Father**, ‘Blessed are they that do his [the Father’s] commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the City.’ Rev. xxii, 14.” Ellen White, *Review and Herald*, June 10, 1852

“**The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, he declares, 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**” ” *Signs of the Times*, February 22, 1899

“Through Solomon **Christ declared**: ‘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.**”” *Signs of the Times* Aug 29, 1900

Proverbs 8:22-30 was a favorite among the early Adventists, and Ellen attributed the words to Christ himself. She pictured the Father as the source of all life, even for the Son. “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” John 5:26. John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18

“All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, the Father’s life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all.”

Desire of Ages p. 21, 1898

The Father is the Source of all life; it flows out from Him through the Son who was begotten from the Father, who proceeded forth (John 8:42) for the very purpose of revealing Him to the creatures of His universe. Thus he was the divine Son of God before coming to earth as the Son of man.

“Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but **Christ, the Only Begotten of God**, could fully enter into His purposes...” *Patriarchs and Prophets* p. 36 1890

“he was **the only-begotten Son of the Father**” *Signs of the Times*, November 23, 1891

“The **Majesty of heaven, the only begotten of the Father**, responds to

Satan's claims.” *Review and Herald*, June 20, 1893

“He was **the only-begotten Son of God**, who was one with the Father from the beginning.” *Signs of the Times*, May 28, 1894

“**Who is Christ? He is the only begotten Son of the living God.**” *Youth Instructor*, June 28, 1894

“The Eternal Father, the unchangeable one, gave **his only begotten Son, tore from his bosom** Him who was **made in the express image of his person**, and sent him down to earth to reveal how greatly he loved mankind.” *Review and Herald*, July 9, 1895

“Christ should be uplifted as the first great teacher, the **only begotten Son of God**, who was with the Father **from eternal ages.**” *Special Testimonies On Education*, p. 230 1895

“But the Lord's arrangement, made in council with **his only begotten Son**, was to leave men free moral agents to a certain length of probation.” *Review and Herald*, December 21, 1897

“**Christ, the only begotten Son of God**, was the delegated messenger...And in this gift **the Father gave all heaven to the world.**” *Review and Herald*, February 15, 1898

“The dedication of the first-born had its origin in the earliest times. **God had promised to give the First-born of heaven to save the sinner.**” *Desire of Ages*, p. 51 1898

“The apostle Paul speaks of our Mediator, the **only-begotten Son of God**, who **in a state of glory was in the form of God**, the Commander of all the heavenly hosts, and who, when He clothed His divinity with humanity, took upon Him the form of a servant.” *Youth's Instructor*, October 13, 1898

“**Christ, the only begotten Son of God**, left the royal courts and came to this world, and through him God poured forth the healing flood of his grace.” *The Youth's Instructor*, March 30, 1899

“**Before the foundations of the world were laid, Christ, the Only Begotten of God**, pledged Himself to become the Redeemer of the human race, should

Adam sin.” *Signs of the Times*, August 2, 1905

“In order fully to carry out his plan, it was decided that **Christ, the only begotten Son of God**, should give himself an offering for sin.” *Review and Herald*, May 2, 1912

The Spirit of God likewise flows, or proceeds (John 15:26) from the Father, through the Son, to bring the Father’s life to all His creatures. Our communion is with the Father and the Son (1John 1:3) by means of their Spirit or life which returns through the Son back to the Father. She ever spoke of the separate, individual persons of the Father and the Son.

“There is **a personal God**, the Father; there is **a personal Christ**, the Son.” *Review & Herald*, Nov 8 1898

“I have often seen the lovely **Jesus**, that **He is a person**. I asked Him if His **Father was a person and had a form like Himself**. Said Jesus, **‘I am in the express image of My Father’s person.’**” *Early Writings*, p. 77 1851

“From eternity there was **a complete unity between the Father and the Son**. They were **two, yet little short of being identical; two in individuality, yet one in spirit, and heart, and character.**” *Youth’s Instructor* Dec. 16, 1897

The Father and Son are not identical. They are thus not absolutely co-equal in all aspects. But in John 10:15 Jesus said that he “knows the Father” even as the Father knows him.

Their unity is not physical but in character, heart and mind because they share the same Spirit.

William E. Channing in 1882 also described the Father as the source of immortal life that “flows” through His Son to us.

“We earnestly maintain...that **our Father** in heaven is **originally**, essentially, and eternally placable, and disposed to forgive; and that his **unborrowed, underived, and unchangeable love is the only fountain of what flows to us through his Son.**” *The Works of William E. Channing*, 1882, p. 371

The same kind of life that Christ had, is given to man as a free gift and

our life is derived from Jesus. In this sense, Jesus is our Father consistent with Isaiah 9:6, Isa 22:20-23, Heb 2:13, Isa 8:18. He is the head of the Church, as His Father is the head of Christ, 1Cor 11:3. Jesus bestows this same life to us, because He received it from His Father. Jesus said,

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

So Christ, the Son of God, inherited immortal, eternal, divine life from His Father. Christ is the only one who has this life by birth; He inherited it by being brought forth from God. The Son received this life as He has everything else, every other power, from His Father.

Charles Spurgeon, 1875

Spurgeon’s sermon delivered October 3, 1875 was also based on John 8:42

“Jesus Christ is the Son of God, by what we are accustomed to call **eternal filiation**, or what the text calls **proceeding from him**; and therefore because of that, **being divine and proceeding from the divine Father in some mysterious sense**, he is himself to be devoutly adored, and if we are the children of God we must love the Lord Jesus.” Sermon 1257 “Love to Jesus the Great Test” delivered October 3, 1875 based on John 8:42.

And then in 1883,

“A man is the father of a man; a man is not the father of that which he makes with his own hands, such as a statue or a painting; but a man is the father of another who is of the **same nature** as himself, and the Lord Jesus Christ is of the **same nature** as God in all respects—a **true Son**. The Lord Jesus Christ is **equal in nature** to the Father, and therefore he counts it not robbery to be equal with God, and he receives the same honor and worship as the Father, as saith the Scripture, “that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father.” Charles Spurgeon, sermon

1727 “The Voice from the Cloud”, June 24, 1883

Spurgeon spoke of an equality of nature by which both the Father and Son are God in nature, because Christ is a true Son inheriting the very same divine nature of God his Father.

It is interesting how Spurgeon understood Genesis 1:26.

“It was with **the Son of God** that the Father took counsel when he said, “Let **us** make man in our **own** image, after our likeness.” *Ibid*, Sermon 1727. He was not alone in this conviction. This was the general belief of many.

J. Cynddylan Jones, 1884

“ ‘Ye have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from—out of—the Father, and am come into the world.’ Not only He came from God, but **He came out of God**. John the Baptist came from God: ‘There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.’ But **Jesus Christ came, not from God, but out of God—He emerged from His central essence**, ‘And He came into the world’—not to it, but into it: **out of God into the world**, out of the loftiest heart of Divinity into the deepest heart of humanity” *The Local preacher’s treasury*, ed. by John Bate 1884. The Divine Love: Christmas Sermon p. 542.

The true Son of God, from out of God, inherited the Father’s divinity. This was the almost universal belief of the early 19th century—the result of the Great Advent Awakening that led men back to the study of the Bible.

Scripture tells us that the Son of God “proceeded forth” and “came out from” God the Father (John 8:42; 16:28). How we understand *when* this occurred shapes our understanding of the Holy Spirit and the Cross. In each case we are faced with two choices:

1. the Biblical record, or
2. the traditions of men

We will now compare the two.

1 Biblical Record 2 Traditions of Men

Son of God

1. If we accept the Biblical record that “God brought the Firstborn into the world” (Heb 1:6, He was already the Firstborn when he was brought to Earth), “unto us a Son is given” (Isa 9:6, He was already a Son when he was given), He was “brought forth, before the Earth was” and “before the mountains were formed” (Prov 8:22-25), His “goings forth” were “from the days of eternity” (Micah 5:2) “the King and the King’s Son” created the world “in the beginning” (Prov 30:4)

then it is easy to understand that the Son is fully divine, has the same nature as his Father, has the same powers and authority, and name because he inherited it from his Father. He can be called God, because “in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead” (Col 2:9). And since it is the Son of God who died on the cross, Deity died for us, offering up Himself as a divine sacrifice “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” (2Cor 5:19).

The Son of Man

2. If we accept the Biblical record that “In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son, born of a woman” (Gal 4:4), “took on the Seed of Abraham” (Heb 2:16) and David (Rom 1:3), “took part of the same” partaking “of flesh and blood” (Heb 2:14), “made in the likeness of men” (Phil 2:7), “condemned sin in the flesh” “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3), was “in all points tempted as we are yet without sin” (Heb 4:15)

then it is easy to understand that the Son is fully human, took upon himself our fallen nature, was victorious over sin in the same kind of flesh as we have, to show that it is possible with God’s indwelling presence for weakened human beings to overcome sin today just as he overcame: “the Father that was in him did the works” (John 14:10).

And since it is the Son of Man who is now mediating for us in heaven, “the man Jesus Christ” (1Tim 2:5), we have the assurance that we will one day join him on his throne “even as he

overcame and is set down with his Father on His throne” (Rev 3:21). This is “an exceeding precious promise, by which we may become partakers of the divine nature” (2Pet 1:4) just as his divine nature partook of our human nature.



Jesus is thus the Ladder that Jacob saw in vision, reaching both to the throne of God (his divine nature) and all the way to Earth (his human nature) to reach and save even fallen mankind.

Jesus is the Paraclete, the Advocate, the Helper, the Comforter, who comes to us as he promised, “I will come to you” (John 14:18). He sends his divine nature, his Spirit (John 20:22), to dwell in us (John 14:17; Col 1:27) “to work and to do of his good pleasure” (Phil 2:13) that as we partake of his divine nature, which is “the express image” (character) of the Father (Heb 1:3), we may be “changed into the same image... by the Spirit of the Lord” because “the Lord is that Spirit” (2Cor 3:17, 18). Jesus is indeed with us “always even unto the end of the world” (Matt 28:20). He will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb 13:5). He will abide with us forever (John 14:16).

Second Person of the Trinity

1. However, if we accept the traditions of men that the Son is only a title, an appointed designation, by which we are to identify one of three separate but identically equal persons in an eternal Trinity, that the eternally immortal “second person of the Godhead” cannot die or even sin,

then God did not really give his Son, “the fruit of his body (Micah 6:7),” but instead only a domestic partner, a colleague, a fellow deity leaving us mystified how he could give up his Spirit, commending it into the hand of his Father on the cross, and yet still raise himself from the dead, unless he retained a consciousness in death, and doesn’t really die; **then** the Holy Spirit that God sends is another completely separate third person who, while inexperienced in the “feeling of our infirmities” nor “tempted like as we are” (Heb 4:15), is tasked with the responsibility of giving us “grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16), of sympathizing with our plight as helpless sinners and encouraging us in following Jesus.

The Immaculate Man

2. If we accept the traditions of men that Christ took the human nature of Adam *before* his fall, in the perfect innocence of untarnished Eden, that he stepped into the place that Adam had *before* he was tested at the tree of knowledge of good and evil,

then we must accept the doctrine of the immaculate conception, that he must have been born of a perfectly sinless human mother who was unstained by any sin herself; **then** he is a Saviour for Adam, overcoming where Adam failed, gaining the victory where Adam succumbed, but he is not an effective Example for us; he does not prove that mankind, disadvantaged with 4,000 years of hereditary degeneration and weakened by millennia of genetic decay, can gain the victory over the Devil’s temptations, and can faithfully follow the precepts of Jehovah; **then** the gospel is only “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom 1:16) for Adam alone.

Samuel Spear

Bible study led Samuel Spear to the same conclusions. Pastor of the South Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, New York, he wrote an article in the *New York Independent* magazine which appeared in the journal's Nov. 14, 1889 issue entitled "The Subordination of Christ."

Reviewers said, It "avoids all philosophical discussion and foolish speculation." Spear began,

"This doctrine, as held and stated by those who adopt it, is not a system of tri-theism, or the doctrine of three Gods, but is the doctrine of one God subsisting and acting in three persons, with the qualification that the term "person," though perhaps the best that can be used, is not, when used in this relation, to be understood in any sense that would make it inconsistent with the unity of the Godhead, and hence not to be understood in the ordinary sense when applied to men. Bible trinitarians are not tritheists. They simply seek to state, in the best way in which they can, what they regard the Bible as teaching."

Spear emphasized that any doctrine of a trinity must be limited to only what is "revealed in the Bible," what one finds "the Bible as teaching." Such individuals are "Bible trinitarians." Spear, however, made a distinction between "Bible trinitarians" who accept only what Scripture says and Trinitarians who go beyond the Bible to indulge in human speculation and philosophical conjecture.

"The theory of the eternal generation of the Son by the Father, with the cognate theory of the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father, or from the Father and the Son, while difficult even to comprehend, and while at best a mystical speculation, is an effort to be wise, not only above what is written, but also beyond the possibilities of human knowledge."

The Roman Catholic Church took this approach as a solution to the difficulty of trying to harmonize a divine Son of God with a triune god. The demands of co-eternity imposed by a three-part god of one substance make

a divine Son born in eternity past an obvious impossibility. So, rather than identify the trinity concept as problematic, they invented an eternal birth process to save the day. But two humanly devised inventions do not a solution make.

"It is only when men speculate outside of the Bible and beyond it, and seek to be wiser than they can be, that difficulties arise; and then they do arise as the rebuke of their own folly. A glorious doctrine then becomes their perplexity, and engulfs them in a confusion of their own creation. What they need is to believe more and speculate less."

Spear refers to additional concepts of God that were included into the general idea of a trinity. Eternal generation and eternal procession were ways in which the proponents of a triune God could harmonize certain biblical facts about God which must be harmonized with their theory.

"These facts—namely, the **absolute unity of the God head**, excluding all multiplicity of gods, the **absolute divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ** and the **subordination of Christ** in some respect to God the Father — when taken together, have led Biblical scholars to consider the question which relates to the method of harmonizing them. What shall be said on this point?"

He then lists several observations to the Biblical approach:

1. "All the facts above stated rest on the same authority, and, hence, no one of them can be denied without denying *this* authority or misinterpreted the language used."

2. "So the matter stands **in the word of God**; and if Christians were to **confine their thoughts to simply what that word says**, they would never raise any serious questions in regard to the subject, which is, perhaps, on the whole, the best course to pursue"

3. "**It is not necessary**, for the practical purposes of godliness and salvation, **to speculate** on the point at all, or know what biblical scholars have thought and said in regards to it. It is enough to **take the Bible just as it reads**, to believe what it says, and **stop where it stops**."

4. "**All the statements of the Bible must be accepted as true** with whatever qualifications they mutually impose on one another. The whole truth lies in them all when **taken collectively**"

5. "**The subordination of Christ**, as revealed in the Bible, is not adequately explained by referring it simply to His human nature. It is true that, in that nature, He was a created and dependent being, and in this respect like the race whose nature He assumed; and yet the Bible statement of His subordination **extends to His divine as well as his human nature**."

"There is, however, a sense in which the Christ of the Bible, while **essentially divine**, is, nevertheless, in some respects distinct from and subordinate to God the Father. He is spoken of, and frequently speaks of Himself, as **the Son of God, as the only-begotten of the Father**, as being **sent** by God the Father into this world, and as **doing the will of the Father**. He is **never confounded with the Father, and never takes His place**."

Spear thus confirmed the Bible's presentation of a begotten Son of the Father. Spear also concluded that the Son is a separate and distinct person subordinate to God the Father.

"There is no difficulty in finding in His ministry **abundant references to God the Father** as in some respects **distinct from and superior to Himself**, and, hence, involving the idea of His own subordination."

"Paul tells us that God 'created all things **by Jesus Christ**,' and that He is the person, or agent, '**by whom** also He [God] made the worlds.' Eph. 3:9; Heb. 1:2. Neither of these statements can have any relation to the humanity of Christ, and yet in both God is represented as acting in and **through Christ**, and the latter represented as the medium of such action. So, also God is described as **sending forth His Son** into the world, as **giving 'His only begotten Son'** for human salvation, and as not sparing 'His own Son' but **delivering 'him up** for us all.' Gal 4: 4; John 3:16; Rom 8:32."

"These statements imply that this Son who is none other than Christ Himself, existed prior to his incarnation, and that, as thus existing, He was **sent**

forth, given, not spared, but delivered up, by God the Father. The act assigned to God the Father in thus devoting ‘His own Son’ to the work of human redemption, relates to Him as he was before He assumed our nature in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and **supposes in the Father some kind of primacy...**”

“The Bible, while not giving a metaphysical definition of the spiritual unity of God, teaches His **essential oneness** in opposition to all forms of polytheism, and also **assumes man’s capacity to apprehend the idea sufficiently** for all the purposes of worship and obedience.”

Spear certainly had in mind John 17:3. The very basis of our eternal life depends on our knowing the “one true God” whom Jesus called his Father. A multitude of texts do the same.

“The same Bible as clearly teaches that the adorable Person therein known as Jesus Christ, when considered in his whole nature, is **truly divine and truly God in the most absolute sense.** John 1:1-18; 1 John 5:20; Rom. 1:3, 4; 9:5; Titus 2:13.”

There is no question that Jesus was given the name God and the Bible applies it to him. However, Scripture also makes a distinction between the Supreme Almighty God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ who is God by inheritance.

Spear’s paper was originally written to address the subordinate

relationship of the Son of God. It was not directly addressing the fact or fallacy of the Trinity per se. There is no denying of the existence of God’s Spirit or the reality of three divine identities. But these were not the subject of Spear’s work.

There are those who impose on some the belief that Christ was not divine, that the Son of God was created because He appeared at a point in time. But the Son of God was not created, he was begotten of the Father, was a separate person not bound indivisibly with a single God being, but a Being in his own right.

Arius, 15 centuries earlier, believed in the begotten Son, who existed before time in eternity, immutable, “perfect God.” But he also explained begotten as created or purposed or established.

“But we say and believe, and have taught, and do teach, that the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any way part of the unbegotten; and that He does not derive His subsistence from any matter; but that by His own will and counsel He has subsisted before time, and before ages, **as perfect God, only begotten and unchangeable,** and that before **He was begotten,** or created, or purposed, or established, He was not. For He was not unbegotten.” Arius quoted in *The Ecclesiastical History of Theodoret*, Book 1, Chapter 3, ‘Letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia’

The modern version of the Trinity, however, goes beyond scripture to hypothesize an amalgamated coequal three person being. It was this that Spear had rejected. For example one recent confession states:

The Trinity is One. We do not confess three Gods, but one God in three persons, the “consubstantial Trinity”. The divine persons do not share the one divinity among themselves but each of them is God whole and entire: “The Father is that which the Son is, the Son that which the Father is, the Father and the Son that which the Holy Spirit is, i.e. by nature one God.”

Indeed, as many have observed, you can spend a lifetime seeking to understand such a mysterious triune God or go insane trying. Such an assault on reason and the promise of God that we “might know” Him has led many to oppose such a philosophical concept.

Yet, while we have a responsibility to speak up when the enemy is at the gates, the spirit in which we make our appeals is critical. God has designed His body to function as a channel for the blessings of life and love to flow throughout His universe where God is the Fountain, the Source of all things.

God is the Head of Christ;
Christ is the Head of mankind;
Man is the Head of woman.
This is the teaching of 1Cor 11:3.

The river of life flows from the throne of God and the lamb. Rev 22:1. As we drink of that water, it becomes a well of water springing up, and out of us shall flow rivers of living water. John 4:14;7:38. As we submit to the divine plan of Source and Agent, the blessings of God can freely flow. This is true for husbands and wives, fathers and sons, elders and laity. The flow can be disrupted if either the source or the agent fails in their part of the relationship. When that happens we must appeal, encourage, respect and pray.

“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” Acts 8:37

