The Trinity Is God Three-in-One

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Introduction

The subject of God is mysterious, confusing to almost all. Yet the single most important knowledge in the universe would be that of the true God. What could be more important than which god one worships? Millions, indeed billions, have asked WHO and WHAT is God? This all-important question has confounded man for millennia.

He has still not found the answer!

With the explosion of new and different brands of Christianity, confusion about God has not lessened in the modern age. And the so-called "great religions" of the world have only made it worse. Yet, correctly identifying the true God is the central issue towering over EVERYTHING in life. It is at the core of all that is truth. For those who believe that God authored the Bible—Christians!—the question comes into sharper focus. Who and What is the God of the Bible?

Millions of professing Christians believe in, speak of and weekly sing about God as a "trinity"—"Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Acceptance of this god has become perhaps the greatest litmus test of orthodox or traditional Christianity. But is the Bible's God a trinity—three persons in ONE BEING? Can this be proven? Or is God a Family—and can this be proven? If the "trinity god" is false—if it is not the God of the Bible—it must be rejected. In its place must come an understanding of the true God.

Which Is Better?

Consider this question. Which would be better: having correct understanding of every single doctrine in the Bible, but having neither true knowledge of nor contact with the God who inspired it?—or, having absolutely no knowledge of a single Bible truth on any subject except the nature and identity of the true God, and contact with Him?

Let's consider further. The Bible is filled with hundreds of separate doctrinal truths: the gospel, salvation, baptism, identity and location of the true Church, the name of that Church, whether one should keep holy Saturday or Sunday, whether one should observe the annual festivals of Leviticus 23 or various humanly-devised holidays, financial laws, the purpose of marriage, principles of proper childrearing, punishment in the afterlife, the nature of repentance and conversion, the unpardonable sin, dietary laws and health, healing, scores of prophetic truths, the law of God, the role of Christ, and many, many more. I ask again: Would it be more important to understand all these Bible truths while at the same time lacking the knowledge of who is the true God—or to know nothing of them, but to have direct contact with the God who recorded them?

Think! If one knew and was worshipping the TRUE GOD, he would automatically be led into all the right knowledge offered by that God, revealed only to those who have a relationship with HIM. This would happen relatively quickly after entering into such contact. The true God would

not leave one in ignorance about exactly how He was to be worshipped—in other words, knowledge of all the many truths contained in His Word. The knowledge of the true Plan of God, the location of the true Church and Work of God—and every other divinely-revealed point of understanding—flows from being in direct contact with the right God. On the other hand, possessing all of the knowledge about every Bible doctrine would be utterly useless if one was worshipping the WRONG GOD! Mere knowledge of true doctrine would not necessarily, and certainly not automatically, lead a person to the God who authored it, and thus his religion would be in vain.

God must reveal Himself to any who come to know Him! He must distinguish Himself from all other supposed gods or deities. Set aside all personal bias and see if He is revealing Himself to you.

Founded On False Knowledge

Have you ever asked why people believe as they do?—why have so many come to accept the doctrines they hold as having come from the Bible? Why have YOU believed and accepted the things that YOU do? Most who consider themselves Christians have carelessly assumed from childhood the answer to the greatest question they could ever address —that is, do they have, and are they worshipping, the RIGHT GOD?

Most come into adulthood having accepted without question what they heard, read or were taught in Sunday school. They are unwilling to challenge what their peers have also accepted without question. Strangely, such people often vigorously defend their beliefs, feeling no need to examine PROOF of why they hold them—or to consider how they came to such beliefs. Human nature wants to follow the crowd. And this has been the case with virtually every popular teaching, tradition and practice found in orthodox Christianity—even though all have been taken almost entirely from paganism, false customs and human reasoning. This is why the masses have followed a god conceived and developed outside the pages of the Bible.

Incredibly, I have even seen those who knew the true God become willing to carelessly exchange Him for another god as easily as taking trash to the dumpster. Yes, throughout history, many who have known the true God of the Bible have been willing to blur and even lose altogether the knowledge of who and what He is.

Source of Deception, Confusion

The apostle John described the devil as having "deceived the whole world" (Rev. 12:9). Satan's goal has been to keep man from a relationship with his Creator. The apostle Paul called Satan "the god of this world" who "has blinded them which believe not" (II Cor. 4:4). Is it strange to think of the devil as this world's GOD? Does this seem impossible to believe? Yet there it is in your Bible. As arch-deceiver, the devil would most want to blind mankind to the identity of the true God. In fact, you will learn that Satan is the author of the trinity doctrine—that this false god is a counterfeit—a substitute deity—designed to deceive millions into unwittingly worshipping him, while thinking they are serving the God of Christianity and the Bible. (This book does not capitalize "trinity," as is normally done.)

The highly educated of this world ought to know WHO God is! But they do not, because this is spiritual knowledge, DIVINELY REVEALED by the very God these scholars and educators have been unable to discover on their own—and Whom they could never discover on their own.

These modern educators have been steeped in the false understanding of the theory of evolution. Because they have believed this fable, they have taught it to millions of unsuspecting

minds, and conditioned those minds to reject God's revelation of Himself at the very beginning of Genesis. Then, having rejected the Creation account of Genesis, inspired by the God of the Bible, these have become blinded to the identity of the true God—leaving them utterly unable to find their way out of the maze of confusion they have created for themselves. Evolution has taught them self-reliance, and ultimately cut them off from the knowledge that would have freed them from ignorance in all the most important matters of life. There they sit, without answers to life's greatest questions. Because intellectual vanity—plain pride!—would not let them seek a power greater than their own minds, these have literally trapped themselves in confusion, with no idea where to turn for light.

The Unknown Book

If the Bible is as it has been called—"The Book that nobody knows"—then the One who authored it is truly the God nobody knows! Not what He intended, this God has remained concealed from a humanity willing to follow no end of humanly devised deities, including a "mystery god" that cannot be understood.

A world-famous evangelist declared of the trinity, "When I first began to study the Bible years ago, the doctrine of the Trinity was one of the most complex problems I had to encounter. I have never fully resolved it, for it contains an aspect of mystery. Though I do not totally understand it to this day, I accept it as a revelation of God…To explain and illustrate the Trinity is one of the most difficult assignments to a Christian."

How true! With at least 10 recognized versions of the trinity, no wonder it cannot be understood.

Mystery books are often bestsellers. Everyone seems to like the proverbial "Whodunit?" Mysteries in which a crime was committed involve several critical elements that must eventually come to light—perpetrator, witnesses, weapon, motive and other evidence. When this happens, there is satisfaction and excitement. Who would read a mystery book or watch a mystery movie knowing in advance it was not going to be solved in the end?

But the mysteries of men's religions always remain mysteries. In the end, they are never explained—never SOLVED—and followers are told they must accept this. This is no truer than when it comes to the concept of a triune god. Why would billions of people accept—and for a lifetime—a mystery about God, when they would not accept this of a mere book or movie?

Yet they do.

If the trinity represents the true God, we could ask: Why is there such widespread confusion and division—such disagreement—about God? Why is the subject of God not clear—plain!—to the common man? The Bible declares, through the apostle Paul, that "God is not the author of confusion" (I Cor. 14:33). God never wants His servants to be confused. Why then have so many been willing to accept without question this confusion about God? So many say, "God just doesn't seem real to me." But they seem willing to let Him remain this way. Not only do the masses stand in ignorance of life's most important knowledge, including the identity of the true God and correct understanding of the many truths that He teaches, most do not appear to care. Billions do not even seem to want to know—to want to solve the mysteries of God and His Word. Strangely, they seem willing to read a mystery book knowing in advance the mystery will not be solved.

All of this said, you may have some difficulty understanding parts of this book. But that will actually be good! Remember, the trinity god is deemed unable to be explained or understood—a "god" that makes no real sense. Therefore, the more in-depth parts of this book—those that go

deeper inside the idea of the trinity—might be hard to follow. Speaking of Russia before World War II, former Prime Minister of Britain Sir Winston Churchill accidentally offered the best description of the trinity: "It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma."

All Bible mysteries can—and should—be understood! What would be the point of God recording the many statements about Himself in His inspired Word so that no one could ever grasp their meaning—never comprehend them? More than any other doctrine, God desires His servants to be able to differentiate Him from all other gods. This means knowing how to identify and separate Him—the true God—from the endless array of false gods within men's religions.

You will see the baffling "mystery" of the supposed trinity god SOLVED in this book! It will be proven to be a fiction of men—and no part of the Bible's teachings.

Coded Book

The Bible is a coded book. It is written as a kind of jigsaw puzzle creating a series of smaller pictures within an overall picture that only becomes clear in meaning when one properly pieces together all passages on a subject. Isaiah 28:10 describes God's Word as written "here a little, and there a little..." This is the way we will study this subject. Also, we must let the Bible interpret itself, and you will see this throughout the book. Because professing Christianity has not understood these two things—either of them—it has remained deceived, led by the counterfeit god of this world, who has substituted himself in place of the true God.

Again, mankind has been deceived about God's AWESOMEPURPOSE for it. Notice what Paul records: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him" (I Cor. 2:9). Here comes a crucial early fact. Paul goes on to explain how men can understand the truths and mysteries of God. Notice: "But God has REVEALEDTHEM [spiritual things] unto us by His Spirit…" (vs. 10). Note that spiritual knowledge is not revealed by any supposed third Person of the trinity, called the Holy Spirit. Only "God" reveals the truth of the Bible to those He is calling (John 6:44, 65)—and He uses His Spirit to do it.

Counterfeit Church

You will learn that the teaching of the triune, "three-in-one" god comes from the great false UNIVERSAL RELIGIOUS SYSTEM, described in Revelation 17:5 as "Mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." This "woman church" has used the trinity to infiltrate and deceive all of traditional Christianity. You will learn this. Originally introduced with much controversy, she has been able to successfully use this teaching to limit God to a supposed three persons.

This seduction includes what the Bible calls "another Jesus" (II Cor. 11:3-4), who is the centerpiece of "another gospel" (same passage) that replaces the true gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the KINGDOM OF GOD. All this deception in turn comes from "another spirit" (also same passage)—called by John "the spirit of error" (I John 4:6). This spirit is that of the god of this world—active throughout this world's "churchianity." The kingdom of God—Christ's message—offers the only real future for a world otherwise without hope. Only the arrival of God's soon-coming, world-ruling SUPERGOVERNMENT will solve humanity's worst problems, troubles, evils and ills.

Most assume the word trinity is in the Bible. Yet this word is nowhere in Scripture. The term and its meaning—like the words triune, three-in-one, etc.—are all inventions of men. With this

cobbled-together god, the God of the Bible has literally been excommunicated from the world of supposed Christianity!

WHO and WHAT then is God? This volume pulls back the veil concealing the true God from mankind and introduces Him to you. It explains the origin and history of the trinity—and will cover the principal scriptures cited to supposedly "prove" it. It exposes the logic—actually the illogic—of trinitarian theology. It will explain the nature and role of the Holy Spirit. It will also answer, "Who and what was Christ?"—and is the Christ of the Bible the same as the one worshipped in modern Christendom? And it will bring absolute proof– the TRUTH—from God's Word about the real nature of the God of the Bible and Creation. This will open the door to God's true plan for mankind.

You will be stunned at what you will learn. The subject is compelling and unlike what you might expect with one that appears to be esoteric or only able to be understood by scholars and intellectuals. In fact, you may also find yourself wondering how anyone could possibly believe the trinity—so easily seen to be wrong, and of pagan origin.

The Hardest Thing

The most difficult thing for any person is to admit being wrong. Unlearning false knowledge and learning true knowledge in its place is not easy. This can sometimes be a painful, even shattering experience. But, you must set aside all bias when reading this book. If you enter it with an open mind, once the evidence is laid out, you will be able to make a clear choice. This means you must be willing to confess mistakes about beliefs and convictions, which in this case may have been held for a lifetime.

The book of Acts describes those of the Greek city of Berea as "…more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (17:11). These new converts were open-minded —but they wanted PROOF. In all points, they turned to God's Word as their sole source of truth.

God commands every Bible student regarding every Bible doctrine to, "PROVE all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thes. 5:21). Nowhere does God ever state, "Just trust me." He wants people to stand on the firm rock of Scripture on all matters. Further, Paul told the Romans, "PROVE what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (12:1-2).

Such proof would surely include proving who and what is God. But first the stage must be set, and this will take time.

No Other Gods before Me

Everyone has heard of the Ten Commandments. The famous half-century-year-old movie of the same name is rerun every spring in connection with the celebration of the ancient supposed Christian tradition of Easter. Many millions have come to know the Hollywood version of the Bible account of the receiving of the Ten Commandments.

America has been embroiled in a legal battle over whether its constitution—requiring the separation of church and state—allows for God's Law to be displayed publicly in courts and government buildings. But Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonin Scalia summarized it best when he said, "Probably 90 percent of the American people believe in the Ten Commandments and 85 percent couldn't tell you what the 10 are." How many could even paraphrase five of them is another question.

Therefore, largely lost in this astounding account in the book of Exodus is the all-important First Commandment, establishing which God it was Who gave these laws to ancient Israel in the wilderness. This commandment must be firmly established in your mind from the outset of the book. I repeat: This lies at the heart of all religion.

Moses recorded God's words: "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20:3).

If the Bible is the inspired INSTRUCTION BOOK of an all-wise and all-powerful Creator—the only true God in the universe—His first command could hardly have been otherwise. No true God could want other gods worshipped in His place.

Now God's second, longer command: "You shall not make unto you any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD your God am A JEALOUS GOD" (vs. 4-5). This commandment is a broad, sweeping and explicit prohibition covering every form of false worship involving every kind of supposed "god"—and representation of such—that human beings with creative imagination could invent. Like any parent whose children went home to a different house and to different parents after school, the Parent who made all human beings—His children—would be jealous if they went after idols and false gods.

God's Third Commandment is tied to the first two. It describes the careful reverence with which God wants His name to be used at all times: "You shall not take the NAME of the LORD your God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that takes His NAME in vain" (vs. 7). The meaning here is that when people even reference the true God, they should be very careful (Psa. 111:9). They should think about the purpose—the reason—for which they mention God's most holy name.

The Fourth Commandment is also tied directly to the identity of the God of the Bible: "Remember the SABBATH day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor, and do all your work: but the SEVENTH DAY is the sabbath of the LORD your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (vs. 8-11).

The world has discarded observance of the seventh-day Sabbath in place of Sunday, the first day of the week. This extraordinary command, given for a vital purpose, creates a special problem for the evolutionist—even the one who professes to believe in God, including the God of the Bible.

Here is how: God expects all His servants to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. Why? So they would never forget which God it was Who "in six days" created—the context means "re-created"—"heaven and earth," and who sealed this by resting on "the seventh day." In this way, the God who authored the Bible directly ties the Ten Commandments to Creation, which, in turn, leaves no room for His servants to drift into worshipping other gods. By observing the Sabbath every seven days, the adherent is forced to be cognizant of the sole God of Creation.

God leaves no room in His first four commandments for other gods or wrong forms of worship. He expects to be worshipped as He is, including on the day that He, not man, has selected for worship. He permits no room for human opinion—He accepts no substitution of the false for the true.

The evolutionist has a big problem explaining belief in a God who created all life on Earth in six days. (Incidentally, much science—that you never hear about—supports Creation and makes evolution impossible.) But, having rejected the Creation account of this God, it becomes much easier for the evolutionist to go on to the next step—the rejection of that God, and possibly the idea that there even is a God! Faithful Sabbath observance every seven days eliminates this problem.

(You should take time to prove there IS a God. Read our informative booklet Does God Exist?, as well as our thorough, illustrated brochure Evolution - Facts, Fallacies and Implications. Unlike anything you have read, these establish a foundation to build a right relationship with God. Also take note that a page recommending additional literature is included at the back to make the reader aware of material that expands related subjects that cannot be as thoroughly discussed here.)

God Most Plain

These commandments are not difficult to understand. The God of the Bible speaks plainly—He says what He means and means what He says! (Note that God repeats for emphasis in Deuteronomy 5 the same Ten Commandments verbatim.)

Do the first four commands sound like the laws of a God who takes lightly those who worship any but Himself? Do they seem like mere wishful instruction on the part of this God—things He only hopes His followers will do? Do they sound like the words of a God willing to let people worship idols or false gods as long as the proponent proclaims such to be the true God? No they do not!

A relationship with, and understanding of, the Bible's God begins with accepting the first four commandments. These describe how to love God, and the last six reveal how to love one's

fellow man. Put another way, the first four explain how to establish a relationship with the true God and the last six how to build relationships with human beings.

Did Israel Remain Faithful?

We now ask whether the nation of Israel lived up to her promises to God made in the book of Exodus. And then we must examine what can be learned from her record and what lessons can be applied. You will see that the relevance to hundreds of millions alive today will be shocking—and unmistakable.

God intended the nation of ancient Israel be a MODEL NATION for all other nations to copy. He expected His people to set an example of how happiness, peace, abundance, blessings and protection from enemies would result from obedience to Him. Sadly, despite an early willingness and determination to obey God, starting when the commandments were first given at Sinai, Israel repeatedly found herself copying the nations around her and worshipping their gods, thus achieving the very opposite of God's purpose! (Recall how quickly Israel fell into worship of the "golden calf" after the Ten Commandments were given—before Moses could even get down from the mountain.) This worship of false gods had repercussions lasting thousands of years.

The long, broken history of Israel is that she repeatedly turned from the true God and fell into the seductive trap of idolatry and the worship of foreign gods. Each time this pattern repeated itself, God sent her back into slavery. After a time, she would cry out in bondage, offering repentance, and God would raise up a judge and deliver her. But His people would quickly fall back into the worship of false gods and idols, leading back to captivity, then to later repentance, again followed by God's merciful deliverance—all of this happening time and again. This cycle, described in the book of Judges and elsewhere, was never broken until ancient Israel and Judah finally went into captivity (for the next-to-last time), with 10 of the 12 tribes becoming lost to history. Only the Jews—Judah mixed with one other tribe—have retained their national identity, and this is largely attributed to having continued to observe God's Sabbath.

Jeremiah and Isaiah Summarize

Here is how God, through the prophet Jeremiah, describes and laments the continual actions of His people—His "nation": "Has a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? But My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. Be astonished, O you heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be you very desolate, says the LORD. For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (2:11-13).

The latter phrase in this passage accurately describes all the false gods devised by men and nations over the last 6,000 years. These manmade "gods"—made of wood, stone, metal and false thinking—are truly "broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Yet those nations (and religions) cleave to these fictional gods with a faithfulness Israel never showed to the true God.

Jeremiah continues, describing Israel's approach to gods she had copied and created: "Saying to a stock [of wood—a mere carved idol], You are my father; and to a stone, You have brought me forth: for they have turned their back unto Me, and not their face." Speaking for God, Jeremiah then says of these gods, "But in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us. But where are your gods that you have made you? Let them arise, if they can save you in the time of your trouble: for according to the number of your cities are your gods, O Judah" (vs.

27-28).

This is a classic description of what is seen throughout the world in all the modern nations that consider themselves to be based upon Judeo-Christian roots. Idols, carvings, religious statues and stained-glass windows abound on and in every church in every city, with no one thinking anything of it.

In a later chapter, we will look at the popular "Jesus" worshipped throughout Christendom today. Even as early as the first century, the apostle Paul was warning a congregation of God's people (the Corinthians)—those of His Church!—of the danger of following "another Jesus," who is tied to "another gospel" and this, in turn, he revealed is tied to following "another spirit" (II Cor. 11:3-4). You will find this revelation to be positively stunning—shocking beyond what you can imagine about the traditional "Jesus" taught in every church throughout the Western World.

Now continuing with Jeremiah's account. God had always made Himself available to Israel, easy to find for those who sought Him: "O generation, see you the word of the LORD. Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? A land of darkness? Wherefore say My people, We are lords; we will come no more unto You? Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number" (2:31-32). God has never been "a wilderness" to those who seek Him. The question has always been whether Israel would seek and obey Him.

How many young women would ever permit themselves to dress up for a special occasion, but forget to put on jewelry—her "ornaments"? Surely few. Then, what bride at her wedding could possibly forget to put on her wedding dress—her "attire"? Absolutely none.

Yet, astonishingly, Israel had forgotten THEIR GOD!

This only happened because she disregarded God's basic instruction—and commandments!—and got involved with the gods of surrounding nations.

The prophet Isaiah declares this from God about the woeful—and ignorant—state of His people, then and today: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD has spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me. The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel does not know, My people do not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (1:2-4).

Isaiah is describing a nation that had fallen into every conceivable kind of corruption, evil and sin, all of which could be attributed to having forsaken the true God.

The Twin Sins

Leviticus 26 outlines what God expected of Israel from the beginning. Early in the chapter, He describes a long list of promises He would fulfill if she obeyed, but includes an even longer list of punishments that would come if she did not keep her part of the bargain. The first three verses of the chapter set the stage and reveal what God considered to be the two greatest "twin sins" that would set in motion the punishment to follow—idolatry and Sabbath-breaking. This warning brings special emphasis from God's mind to avoiding idolatry at all costs and to always remember the Sabbath Day that points to the God of Creation!

Let's read: "You shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall you set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God. You shall keep My sabbaths, and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD. If you walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them…" (vs. 1-3).

God knew that if His people committed either of these great offenses, they would lose contact with Him—and every evil, curse and bad effect would result. But commission of these offenses also explains why the entire world is in such confusion, and is plagued by every problem, evil and ill known to man.

Though not the subject of this volume, Almighty God will soon intervene in the affairs of all nations. The time of final punishment of the modern nations descended from Israel, which will then involve the final captivity for disobedience, is soon to occur. (You are urged to read our thorough book America and Britain in Prophecy to grasp the bigger picture of who these nations are and all that is at stake for them.)

Worldwide Confusion—Gods and More Gods

The world is filled with gods of every sort. It is as though mankind has reserved the very best of its creative powers to invent every conceivable type of god and goddess—whether composed of physical matter or defined by ethereal concepts of the mind. The world's billions of people worship literally millions of gods.

Paul expresses it best: "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. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge…" (I Cor. 8:5-7). So many gods, and so much confusion.

Trimurti, a Hindu triad of deities

Osiris, Horus and Isis

Notice how Paul references "the Father" and "Jesus Christ," thus differentiating them from all other "gods" and "lords," but, missing the perfect opportunity, fails to mention the Holy Spirit, the supposed third member of the trinity. A later inset will show that Paul always fails to do this.

The Romans worshipped and built temples to an endless array of gods and goddesses. It is said that the ancient Greeks worshipped as many as 30,000 gods. Not to be outdone, Hindus today are said to have 5 million, including their own trinity—Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu! The Egyptians, as did other civilizations, also had their own brand of a trinity—Osiris (or Seb), Horus and Isis. These trinities send an unmistakable message about where the idea of a three-in-one god came from. Then there is Tao, Confucius, Buddha, Allah and a host of other gods, goddesses and idols worshipped today, including totem poles, nature, snakes, animals and fish, volcanoes and mountains, fire, wind, rocks, sun, moon, planets, stars and even certain human beings who are considered divine.

Finally, what about all the metaphysical concepts of gods adored and worshipped in the mind —often depicted by symbols and representations by artists. This describes the trinity.

While most are probably unaware of this, vastly more people believe in the three-in-one god of mainstream Christianity than any other god.

The Unknown God

At this point, we need to look at a fascinating longer account illustrating why superstitious man will even worship all gods at the same time to be sure to include the true one. This account paints an astounding picture. Take careful note of the last sentence. The story from Acts involves Paul speaking to Greek polytheists in Athens:

"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, You men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions [gods], I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore you ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He gives to all life, and breath, and all things; and has made of one blood all nations of men [all races] for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men everywhere to repent" (17:22-30).

Notice Paul's reference "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD" (also in capital letters in the King James Bible). God had to reveal Himself to the superstitious Greeks through Paul. They had devised a "catch-all" inscription to include any god missed in their "devotions." They had left no stone unturned in the worship of every deity. But they had not tried to "seek," "feel after" and "find Him."

King Solomon recorded that there is "no new thing under the sun" (Ecc. 1:9). Truly, the God of the Bible has been unknown to countless millions who have been content to worship a god selected for them by men. Theologians and religionists have sought the opinions of philosophers, scholars and supposed experts, instead of the only important opinion—that of God, found in His Word. You are about to see that, centuries ago, these religious leaders brought a god to the masses who were only too willing to swallow it without proof.

The God Who Is Alive

Let's ask, What is the ultimate difference between the God of the Bible and all other gods? How does God differentiate Himself from all others?

Throughout Scripture, God describes Himself as "the living God"—the "Eternal"—"I AM THAT I AM" (the name in Exodus 3:14 that He told Moses to use before Pharaoh). The God of the Bible separates Himself from all other gods by declaring Himself to be ALIVE!—LIVING!—meaning ALL other gods are non-existent or, in a sense, "dead." Put another way, the true God states, "I AM," meaning other gods "ARE NOT"—period.

Continually ask yourself throughout the book whether you are worshipping the TRUE GOD—the God who is ALIVE—or something non-existent and "dead"—a god who is not! This question towers over all others before you.

The Heart of the Problem

Let's momentarily return to both ancient Israel and to modern theologians, educators and evolutionists. The prophet Hosea summarized Israel's problem then and that of religionists and supposed "rationalists" of today:

"My people are destroyed for LACK OF KNOWLEDGE: because you have REJECTED KNOWLEDGE, I will also reject you, that you shall be no priest to Me: seeing you have FORGOTTEN the law of your God, I will also forget your children" (4:6). This is the problem every reader must squarely face. Will you reject vital knowledge offered here about God? Then, will you "seek" and "feel after" the true God?

Paul, in the New Testament, is inspired to further record God's view of those who consciously, willingly reject THE TRUTH of Who and What He is, so plainly visible throughout His Creation:

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress [Greek: hold back] the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not HONOR Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1:18-22, NASB).

This passage describes the intellectually vain, but foolish, originators of the evolutionary theory, who found the existence of God to be superstition that they could neither understand nor accept. Yet God thunders that the facts—the evidence seen throughout His Creation, on Earth and in the heavens—leave them "without excuse." The ancients rejected CLEARLY EVIDENT KNOWLEDGE that unmistakably pointed to the existence of a God—and that He was the God of Creation. The same is true today. Why? Because so many will not "honor"—they refuse to OBEY—Him, when His existence and identity can be known!

A little later in context, verse 28 of Romans 1 describes how God dealt with mankind because it would not admit the Creation proved His existence. Notice: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." The word "reprobate" means "void of judgment."

Humanity has been void of judgment on all important matters. This is why its problems and troubles have only multiplied. But has all this led mankind to search out the true God from the false? Later in Romans, Paul answers the question and adds to the picture of basic human nature when it comes to whether human beings will seek God: "There is none that understands, there is NONE THAT SEEKS AFTER GOD. They are all gone out of THE WAY" (3:11-12). These verses reveal that there have been no exceptions in who chooses to seek God and His Way.

In Paul's letter to Timothy, he described mankind collectively as "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of THE TRUTH" (II Tim. 3:7). This certainly includes the knowledge —the truth—of God Himself. God must REVEAL Himself to individuals or they cannot know Him (John 6:44, 65).

What is written here is SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE, unknown to all but a very few, and knowledge that you could not discover on your own. Ask yourself: "Is the true God revealing Himself to me?"—and "Will I treasure this special, all-important knowledge?"

Basic Honesty Required

Let's return to the problem facing those examining the trinity god. Some who have accepted evolution have not turned to outright atheism. But, influenced by evolutionary thinking, modern theologians and religionists have not honestly explored the trinity god in light of the PLAIN FACTS from history and Scripture. They have professed themselves to be Christians, meaning they want to appear to be followers of the God of Creation. Again, in the end, these have not been willing to face the facts about their "god." They have not been willing to come to the understanding of the TRUE GOD—the LIVING GOD!

Then, in succession, millions of professing Christians, also unwilling to explore the facts for themselves, follow these deceived men. They remain duped by dishonest, seductive arguments designed by the god of this world to lead them to the worship of himself. In their vanity (Rom. 1:22), they have foolishly rejected vital knowledge. The result has been that so many have unnecessarily become "darkened"—blinded—to plain understanding of God.

For God to require obedience to His first four commandments without explaining Who and What He is would be cruel. Not equipping His worshippers to be able to distinguish Him from other gods would have been grossly unfair. This book equips you as God intended.

When confronting 450 prophets of Baal, who were seeking to lead Israel away from the true God, the prophet Elijah presented ancient Israel with the ultimate question—and the choice facing you in this book. Will your response mirror those who heard Elijah?

"And Elijah came unto all the people [the Israelites], and said, How long halt you between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (I Kgs. 18:21).

The next chapter presents an extensive look at the history of the trinity doctrine and trinitarian god. Together with the remaining chapters, it will prepare you—actually arm you—to answer what Israel would not.

Ancient Roots of the Trinity

It has been said that those who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it. To truly unlearn all that the trinity entails, one must examine how it developed—its history. This chapter covers the origin of the teaching spanning thousands of years, even before the time of Christ.

You will see that theologians rely on human reasoning because they completely dismiss crucial facts of history! The book is loaded with these facts, bringing quote after quote from respected, reliable historians.

Detail is presented so the reader will not miss the big picture—one that you will see to be fascinating. Many of these introductory quotes bring important background about what was happening in the New Testament Church. They are essential to understand first, before examining the period when the trinity gained acceptance. When put together, these facts are compelling.

It is vital to carefully examine these many sources for the message they contain. The trinity will be seen to have roots almost entirely in philosophy and abstract metaphysics. Remember from Chapter One that elements of this book will be difficult or impossible to understand—and that this is good. You will find yourself wondering how anyone could possibly believe that the trinity is scriptural!

Long before the Christian era, numerous variations of the three-fold god existed, and they were found in a host of pagan religions and mythologies. As with so many other pagan customs and practices that found their way into Christianity, the revival of this doctrine after Christ ascended to heaven was predictable. It was essential that followers be able to see Christianity in familiar terms. Offering pagans a three-in-one god became all-important to add believers—and gain power.

Triad deities (or three-in-one) first appeared in ancient Egypt soon after the Great Flood of Noah's time—around 2300 BC. These deities came to be worshipped as Osiris, Isis and Horus.

Some facts of early history: After the destruction of the Tower of Babel, Nimrod and his wife-mother Semiramis, the first rulers of Babylon, fled to Egypt. Nimrod (known as Ninus or Athothis, among many other names) shared rulership with his father Cush (or Menes) in Egypt's first dynasty. After Nimrod's death, Semiramis claimed their son Horus was Nimrod reincarnated. These three—Osiris (Nimrod), Isis (Semiramis) and Horus (their son)—came to be exalted (Exploring Ancient History—The First 2500 Years, Schulz, ch. 11, 24).

In Babylon, these same three were known as Ninus, Ishtar and Tammuz. Over time, this triad became well-known in many nations. In ancient Rome, a triad of deities was worshipped—Jupiter, Juno and Minerva—and they bore similarities to the above-mentioned triads.

Virtually all ancient religions possessed triad deities. Notice this astonishing

acknowledgment (emphasis ours throughout): "Though it is usual to speak of the Semitic tribes as monotheistic; yet it is an undoubted fact that more or less all over the world the deities are in triads. This rule applies to eastern and western hemispheres, to north and south. Further, it is observed that, in some mystical way, the triad of three persons is one…applied to the trinities of all heathen religions" (Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought, James Bonwick, p. 396).

An example of this is found in the ancient roots of Hinduism. After the 6th century BC, Hinduism featured the three-in-one god that became known as the Trimurti. The god Brahman consisted of (1) Brahma, the creator, (2) Vishnu, the preserver and (3) Shiva, the destroyer (What the Great Religions Believe, Joseph Gaer, p. 25).

Orthodox Christianity vs. Apostolic Christianity

But how did the trinity develop within mainstream Christianity? Why were so many followers receptive to the very same schools of philosophy that had been rejected by the faithful first-century Christians?

After the original apostles died, contradictions in teachings—meaning false doctrine—began to appear en masse, and Church history became lost. Famous historian Edward Gibbon, in The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, candidly acknowledged, "…The scanty and suspicious materials of ecclesiastical history seldom enable us to dispel the dark cloud that hangs over the first age of the church."

For nearly a century after events in the book of Acts—about AD 70 to 170—we find Church history to be virtually blank. In The Story of the Christian Church, Jesse Lyman Hurlbut calls this time the "Age of Shadows." He writes, "…Of all the periods in the [church's] history, it is the one about which we know the least…For fifty years after St. Paul's life a curtain hangs over the church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, about 120 AD with the writings of the earliest church fathers, we find a church in many aspects very different from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul."

The New Testament offers many verses proving an apostasy was occurring, pulling believers from the truth. Notice the many warnings about false apostles and a false movement that already existed in the first century and was threatening the Church:

II Thessalonians 2:7: "For the mystery of iniquity does already work…"

II Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

Historian Edward Gibbon

I John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

At the end of his life, the apostle John returned from exile and confronted this growing apostasy (falling away from truth) in the AD 90s. False leaders had gained control over congregations of the true Church in Asia Minor. Here is one account of the controversy:

"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, received us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he did, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and forbids them that would, and casts them out of the church" (III John 9-10).

Such occurrences must have been repeated many times in many congregations late in John's life. And they continued during the ministry of Polycarp, John's successor.

Many Sources

Secular history also shows how false leaders changed the direction of the Church and cast out the few brethren who remained loyal to the apostles' teachings. About AD 135, the Jerusalem-Pella congregation came under control of an Italian named Marcus. He persuaded the majority to renounce the Ten Commandments, and only those brethren who did this were permitted admittance into Jerusalem by the Roman authorities.

But a faithful few refused to follow Marcus. Notice: "The crimes of heresy and schism were imputed to the obscure remnant of the Nazarenes which refused to accompany their Latin bishop…In a few years after the return of the church of Jerusalem, it became a matter of doubt and controversy whether a man who sincerely acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, but who still continued to observe the law of Moses, could possibly hope for salvation…[the followers of Marcus] excluded their Judaizing brethren [as God's people were also labeled] from the hope of salvation…[and from] the common offices of friendship, hospitality, and social life" (The Decline and Fall, Gibbon, ch. 15, p. 149).

The remnant of the apostolic Church—those determined to adhere to the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles—were accused of "Judaizing." This derogatory term implied that such a person sought to earn salvation by obeying God's commandments, including the Sabbath and His annual Holy Days.

Prominent theologians, such as Justin Martyr (AD 100-167), could not reconcile Christ's words in Matthew 19:17—"…if you will enter into life, keep the commandments"—with the widespread belief that no works of any kind were required for salvation. Justin Martyr from the beginning embraced another gospel (Gal. 1:6-7), and condemned as heretical everything observed by the Jews.

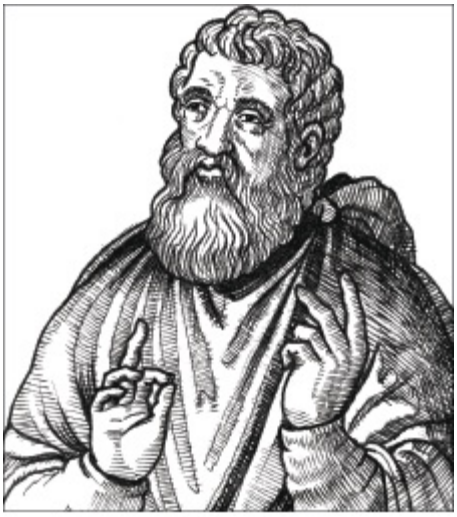
The church that emerged in the early second century was dramatically different from the first-century Church. This transformation was described by Church historian Mosheim: "Christian churches had scarcely been gathered and organized, when here and there, men rose up, who not being contented with the simplicity and purity of that religion which the apostles taught, attempted innovations, and fashioned religion according to their own liking" (Ecclesiastical History, Vol. 1).

But the apostasy, part of an orchestrated movement, was called "orthodox"—while the small, remnant apostolic true Church was suppressed, persecuted and forced into hiding.

Robert Robinson, author of The History of Baptism, wrote, "Toward the latter end of the second century, most of the churches assumed a new form, the first simplicity disappeared; and insensibly, as the old disciples retired to their graves, their children, along with new converts, both Jews and Gentiles, came forward and new-modeled the cause" (Eccl. Research, ch. 6, p. 51, 1792).

During the second century, Polycarp also confronted this apostate movement: "The steady progress of the heretical movement in spite of all opposition was a cause of deep sorrow to Polycarp, so that in the last years of his life the words were constantly on his lips, 'Oh good God, to what times hast thou spared me, that I must suffer such things!'" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 22, p. 22).

Polycarp


Justin Martyr

For instance, Polycarp and his successor Polycrates witnessed the wholesale departure of organized Christianity from observing Passover on the 14th day of the first month of God's sacred calendar, to the observance of Easter, an utterly pagan holiday. The few who held to the original teachings were called Quartodecimani. This faithful minority in Asia Minor, along with the Nazarenes of Syria, were the last holdouts of true Christianity in the eastern Mediterranean area of the Roman Empire (ibid., vol. 8, pp. 828-829).

Edward Gibbon sheds more light on this apostasy and its opposition to the original apostolic teachings. All of the apostates were steeped in the accepted philosophies of that time—Gnosticism in particular: "The Mosaic account of the creation and fall of man was treated with profane derision by the Gnostics…The God of Israel was impiously represented by the Gnostics as being liable to passion and to error…"

Gibbon explains the Gnostics' techniques: "Acknowledging that the literal sense is repugnant to every principle of faith as well as reason, they deem themselves secure and invulnerable behind the ample veil of allegory, which they carefully spread over every tender part of the Mosaic dispensation."

He continued, "The Gnostics were distinguished as the most polite, the most learned, and the most wealthy of the Christian name, and that general appellation which expressed a superiority of knowledge…assumed by their own pride…The Gnostics blended with the faith of Christ many sublime but obscure tenets, which they derived from oriental philosophy…" (Decline and Fall, ch. 15, pp. 150-151). We will examine Gnosticism in greater detail later in this chapter.

But Christ has built His Church and promised it could not be destroyed (Matt. 16:18). While the visible church steadily gained preeminence, and as persecution increased on the true Church, its remnants went underground to survive. As a result, the new "Christianity" of the second, third and fourth centuries had almost nothing in common with the practices and beliefs of the first century Christians. My book Where Is the True Church?—and Its Incredible History! tells this amazing story.

Converts of this "religion in transition" dismissed biblical authority, replacing it with what

came to be viewed as "Orthodox" teachings. They considered Greek philosophy and Gnosticism to be more attractive and familiar.

"Christianity"—or the Bible?

Now let's look at a short overview of how philosophers and theologians disregarded biblical teaching and authority. Note that the term "Christianity" used below refers to established orthodoxy as recognized in the Roman Empire, as opposed to the teachings of Christ and His apostles:

(1) Orthodox Christianity came to accept that the Father was the Creator, rather than having created through Jesus Christ. John's gospel plainly states that Christ (whom he calls "the Word") created all things (John 1:1-14; Col. 1:13-17).

(2) It came to accept that the Father was the God or LORD of the Old Testament. But the Bible shows that this personage was actually Christ (I Cor. 10:1-4).

(3) Orthodox Christianity believed that many people had spoken with the Father (in the Old Testament). Yet Jesus declared that no man had seen or heard the Father (John 5:37). And, because the Father was unknown to the world, one purpose of Christ's coming was to reveal Him (John 1:18, Luke 10:22).

(4) It came to believe that the Father and Son are "one" by some mystical way. However, the Bible says the Father and Son are "one" in the same sense that all members of the Church are "one" in unity and purpose (John 17:11).

(5) Orthodox Christianity accepted the premise of Judaism concerning monotheism—that God was one being. Yet two distinct Beings are identified in the beginning of John's gospel (1:1-2). Likewise, Genesis 1:26 records a conversation between these two God Beings. Notice: "And God said, Let Us make man in Our image…" The word "God" derives from the Hebrew Elohim (a plural term—actually a collective noun—similar to kingdom, family or church). Although there is one God, Kingdom or Family, Scripture reveals that it currently consists of two Beings.

On a related point that confuses many, the Jewish doctrine of monotheism comes from a misunderstanding of Deuteronomy 6:4, which says, "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD." This passage is correctly translated "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is LORDalone (or only)." This verse is not talking about God as one Being—it is not addressing the nature of God—but rather was instruction to Israel to not listen to other gods, but to listen to the true God alone —only! The context of Deuteronomy 6:4 is immediately after the Ten Commandments were listed by Moses to establish the requirements and authority of the true God.

Rather than the God Family being a closed trinity, as accepted by Christianity, this Family will expand through the many begotten sons of God yet to be born into it (John 1:11-12; Rom. 8:14, 19; I John 3:1-2). A later chapter will cover in greater detail the awesome potential of human beings.

Although Orthodox Christianity contradicts the Bible, the Bible does not contradict itself.

Philosophy—the Pillar of Orthodox Christianity

The story of how the trinity became accepted is revealing. The Nicene Council of AD 325 was the pivotal event that marked its acceptance. Two opposing theologies, or factions, took part in this historic controversy.

Rather than seeing the Bible as direct instruction from God, the Orthodox movement used God's Word to allegorically explain pre-conceived philosophies. Notice the first of several

difficult to understand quotes, but ones that are so telling: "The Old Testament, allegorically explained, became the substitute for the outgrown mythology; intellectual activity revived; the new facts gained predominant influence in philosophy..." (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 6, p. 284).

The result was that the Bible's literal meaning was thrown out—reduced to a mere starting point for allegorical interpretation: "As in philosophy, so now in theology, the easiest solution of the problem was the denial of one of its factors: and successively these efforts were made, until a solution was found in the doctrine of the Trinity, which satisfied both terms of the equation [philosophy veiled thinly in theology] and became the fundamental creed of the Church" (ibid.).

The new movement hailed the trinity as a solution to various contradictions in their understanding. It seemed to satisfy the requirement of monotheism while acknowledging that Christ was God in the flesh. Notice: "Its moulds of thought are those of Greek philosophy, and into these were run the Jewish teachings. We have thus a peculiar combination—the religious doctrines of the Bible, as culminating in the person of Jesus, run through the forms of an alien philosophy" (ibid.).

The next quote offers more early insight into the origin of the trinity. The doctrine is "not primarily ethical nor even religious, but it is metaphysical. What is the ontological relationship between these three factors [Father, Son and Spirit]? The answer is given in the Nicene formula, which is characteristically Greek [meaning Greek philosophy]" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 6, p. 284).

This quote acknowledges that the trinity was "not primarily ethical nor even religious." At best, it categorizes the triune god as a metaphysical afterthought!

Now consider a similar—and unusual—admission by Catholic scholars: "We must be willing to admit that, should the doctrine of the Trinity have to be dropped as false, the major part of religious literature could well remain virtually unchanged…the Christian's idea of the incarnation would not have to change at all if there were no Trinity" (The Trinity, Rahner et al., pp.10-11). Let's summarize. Catholics could throw out their god and it would not affect their belief system! Stunning!

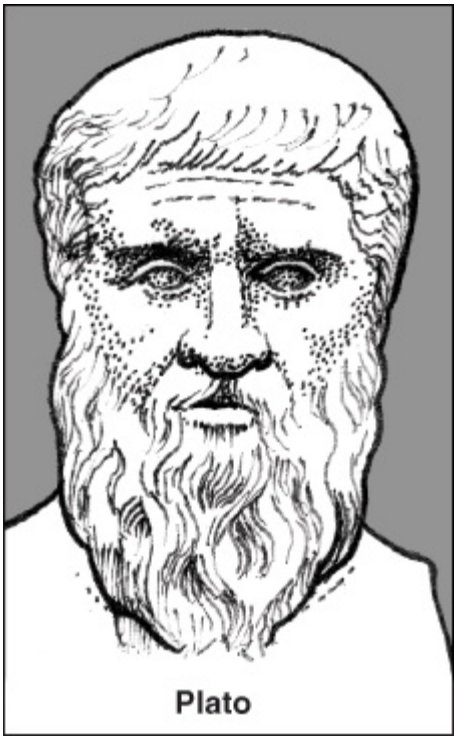
One must question how the trinity could ever grow to such a position of importance.

The Trinity—Conceived in Philosophy

Before examining the dominant philosophy of the second to fourth centuries AD, we focus on the famous Greek philosopher Plato (427-347 BC) and his attempts to define God. Most Greek philosophy was based on his theories, later developing into Middle Platonism and eventually Neo-Platonism. All other philosophical schools of Greek origin, such as the Pythagoreans, were greatly influenced by Platonism.

Plato is considered the greatest of all philosophers. He produced many famous works, including The Republic, in which his ideas were presented in the form of dramatic dialogues. His central dogma asserted that the "ideal" forms an absolute and eternal reality, and that this physical world is but an imperfect and transitory reflection. (If this is difficult to understand, remember, Plato was a philosopher, and the "uneducated" are not supposed to understand "great thinkers.")

Since the concept of triad deities permeated all ancient religions, Plato was deeply ingrained in trinitarian thought. He wanted to better define God above the many deities in Greek mythology. (Recall what Paul found in Athens.) Plato's definition consisted of: (1) The "first God," who was the Supreme Being in the universe; (2) the "second God," whom Plato described


Plato

as the "soul of the universe"; and (3) the "third God," defined as the "spirit" (Gods and the One God, Grant, ch. 12).

Ignoring the Bible, men came to regard Plato's view as mankind's best effort to define God.

Philo

Another theologian, Philo—of Alexandria, Egypt—brought great influence on developing trinitarian thought. He lived about 15 BC to AD 50. From the second to the fourth centuries, this Jewish philosopher's influence was profound.

Himself greatly influenced by Plato, Philo's version of the trinity was unique. This lifelong follower of Greek philosophy saw God as: (1) Father, who created all things (Philo called Him "the Demiurge"), (2) Mother, who was Knowledge the Maker possessed and (3) the Beloved Son was the world. The union of Demiurge and Knowledge supposedly produced man's world.

Such is philosophy—but it is this kind of esoteric thinking that drove the birth and development of the trinity!

Philo

Different from Plato's version, Philo's trinity blended Platonism and Stoicism, and set the course of "Christian" philosophy: "In Greek philosophy…Philo…chiefly follows the Platonic doctrines of Ideas and the Soul of the World, and the Stoic doctrine of God as the…Reason operative in the world. In its Stoic form the latter doctrine was pantheistic [meaning many gods], but Philo could adapt it to his purpose simply by drawing a sharper distinction between the Logos and the world" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 21, p. 411). Hopefully, the reader is confused!

Here is how Greek philosophy influenced Philo: "Philo certainly, to judge by his historical influence, was the greatest of all these Jewish philosophers, and in his case we can follow in detail the methods by which Greek culture was harmonized with Jewish faith…Philo's closest affinities are with Plato, the later Pythagoreans and the Stoics" (ibid.).

Also note that "in whole the substance of his philosophy the Jewish point of view is more or less completely modified—sometimes almost extinguished—by what he has learned from the Greeks…their influence on Philo is nowhere more strongly seen than in the detailed development of his doctrine of God" (ibid., p. 409-410).

Philo's common bond to Greek philosophy made him a significant influence in Christian thought, and thus in the development of the trinity.

Gnosticism

All those who contributed to the trinity doctrine were well-versed in traditional philosophy.

Here is where Gnosticism took its final form: "Gnosticism [Greek for knowledge], the name generally applied to that spiritual movement existing side by side with genuine Christianity, as it gradually crystallized into the old Catholic Church..." (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., Vol. 12, p. 152).

Note that Gnosticism was acknowledged to be distinct from true Christianity. Also, regarding the apocryphal writings, which were rejected as spurious by those who faithfully continued in the apostles' teaching, the previous source states, "Generally also much Gnostic matter is contained in the apocryphal histories of the Apostles."

Irenaeus, once a student of Polycarp, was swayed under the Gnostic influence of Justin Martyr. Irenaeus fell away from the apostolic Church in favor of the counterfeit movement centered in Rome.

Gnosticism also weighed heavily in the writings of Clement of Alexandria, as well as Origen—the most prolific writer of the Christian era. To better understand the appeal of Gnosticism in the Catholic movement, consider the following facts:

"It is a mistake to regard the Gnostics as pre-eminently the representatives of intellect among Christians, and Gnosticism as an intellectual tendency chiefly concerned with philosophical speculation, the reconciliation of religion with philosophy and theology. It is true that when Gnosticism was at its height it numbered amongst its followers both theologians and men of science, but that is not its main characteristic. Among the majority of the followers of the movement 'Gnosis' was understood not as meaning 'knowledge' or 'understanding,' in our sense of the word, but 'revelation'…Gnostic sects and groups all lived in the conviction that they possessed a secret and mysterious knowledge, in no way accessible to those outside, which was not to be proved or propagated, but believed in by the initiated, and anxiously guarded as a secret" (ibid.).

Both Gnosticism and Plato were deeply immersed in mysticism. Notice this—and ask what it means: "Throughout this mystic religious world it was above all the influence of the late Greek religion, derived from Plato, that also continued to operate; it is filled with the echo of the song, the first note of which was sounded by the Platonists, about the heavenly home of the soul and the homeward journey of the wise to the higher world of light" (ibid., p. 155).

Plato's influence in almost every aspect of the movement that replaced first-century Christianity was profound—including mystery religions, the "soul," and the trinity. Gnosticism's influence in the established Christian movement, especially in the second and third centuries, cannot be understated.

Again, however, the Bible teaches its students to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thes. 5:21). In the scriptures, mysteries are unknown areas that are always eventually revealed to the reader who is willing to carefully put together all the scriptures on the matter:

- "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God…" (Mark 4:11)
- "Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed" (I Cor. 15:51)
- "Having made known unto us the mystery…" (Eph. 1:9).
- "Even the mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest [obvious]…" (Col. 1:26).

These verses stand in stark contrast to the positions that the Gnostics held. The established Christian movement, especially in the second century, greatly elevated various cryptic

metaphysical mysteries: “In Gnosticism as in other mystic religions we find the same contrast of the initiated and the uninitiated, the same loose organization, the same kind of petty sectarianism and mystery mongering” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., Vol. 12, p. 153).

Another aspect of Gnosticism shows the strange assortment of mysteries that its followers advocated: “The Gnostic must above all things learn the names of the demons, and equip himself with the sacred formulas and symbols, in order to be certain of a good destiny after death…It was taught that even the redeemer-god, when he once descended on to this earth, to rise from it again, availed himself of these names and formulas on his descent and ascent through the world of demons” (ibid.).

Such mysteries, central to the doctrines of Gnosticism—seen to be so obviously evil and dangerous—molded the so-called “great minds” who contributed to the development of the trinity. Even the name “Demiurge,” which Philo attributed to the “Father who created all things,” was a term commonly used in Gnosticism, as well as in other schools of Greek philosophy.

Origen and Other Contributors

During the second century, the trinity was subject to much speculation. For example, Justin Martyr, known for his anti-Semitism and opposition to all things Hebrew, defined the trinity as “the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit” (Apology 61.3). His thinking was influenced by Middle Platonism, Gnosticism, and the writings of Philo and other prominent philosophers of that time, such as Numenius. Irenaeus, a student of the apostle John’s disciple Polycarp, but who left the true Church, defined the Godhead as consisting of “the Father, the Word and the Wisdom.” The trinity slowly became the focus of theologians and philosophers such as Clement of Alexandria and Origen, who was greatly influenced by the Gnostics.

Origen (AD 185-254) has been called “the most distinguished and most influential of all the theologians of the ancient church, with the possible exception of Augustine. He is the father of the church’s science; he is the founder of a theology which was brought to perfection in the 4th and 5th centuries, and which still retained the stamp of his genius.”

Origen

Continuing, “He could not have been what he was unless two generations before him had labored at the problem of finding an intellectual expression and a philosophic basis for Christianity (Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras, Pantaenus and Clement). But their attempts, in comparison with his, are like a schoolboy’s essays beside the finished work of a master” (Encyclopaedia Britannica 11th ed., vol. 20, p. 270). Such was the reputation of Origen—often thought of as the author and father of the trinity.

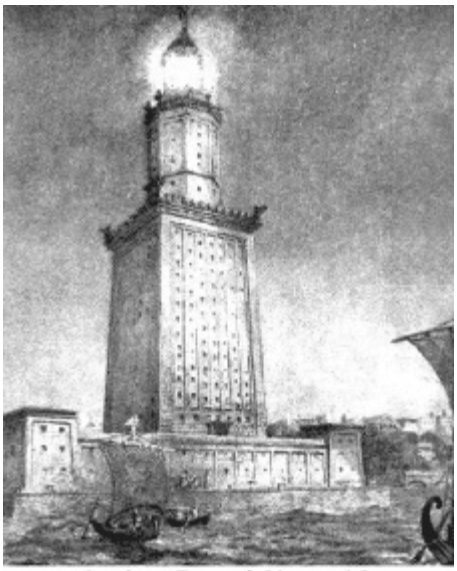
Despite such praise, scholars recognized the difficulty of grasping Origen’s philosophical reasoning. Notice: “To us, indeed, his conception of the universe, like that of Philo, seems a strange medley, and one may be at a loss to conceive how he could bring together such heterogeneous elements; but there is no reason to doubt that the harmony of all the essential parts of his system was obvious enough to himself” (ibid.).

What is this saying? Translated, "His theories do not make sense to us, but surely they do to him."

Origen's thoughts were considered so profound that "Orthodox theology has never, in any of the confessions, ventured beyond the circle which the mind of Origen first measured out" (ibid.).

This was true concerning his version of the trinity, which has largely remained intact as he fashioned it—"Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Of all who contributed to the idea of a trinity—from definition to extensive commentary—Origen is considered to have far exceeded all others.

Like Philo, he grew up and spent most of his life in Alexandria, Egypt, under the influence of its "progressive" atmosphere. Here is some background on the Alexandria that influenced Origen: "Alexandria had been, since the days of the Ptolemies, a centre for the interchange of ideas between East and West—between Egypt, Syria, Greece and Italy; and, as it had furnished Judaism with an Hellenic philosophy, so it also brought about the alliance of Christianity with Greek philosophy…in Alexandria, Christian ideas were handled in a free and speculative fashion and worked out with the help of Greek philosophy" (ibid.).


Ancient Port of Alexandria

Concerning his writings, "Origen is probably the most prolific author of the ancient church. 'Which of us,' asks Jerome, 'can read all that he has written?' The number of his works was estimated at 6000…" (ibid., p. 271).

Origen was steeped in asceticism, the doctrine of extreme self-denial, austerity and human will worship. He slept on cold stone floors and went barefoot most of his life. To curb lust and demonstrate his stoic courage, he surgically made himself a eunuch while lecturing his students. Notice: "His manner of life was ascetic; the sayings of the Sermon on the Mount and the practical maxims of the Stoics were his guiding stars" (ibid., p. 270).

Heavily influenced by Plato, Philo and Origen, professing Christianity increasingly accepted Greek philosophy. In the tradition of the Gnostics, theologians and philosophers allegorized the scriptures to illustrate a higher order of wisdom. In the truest sense, philosophic reasoning became the center of the intellectual universe, with the Word of God orbiting around it. Traditional Christianity, propelled by Greek philosophy, freed itself from God's authority and set out to refashion God into the highest form that the thought-to-be "greatest" human minds could devise. This was most realized in the doctrine of the trinity—a mystery even to its authors, but considered the pinnacle of human creativity.

In the world of the triune deity, men created God instead of the other way around!

The Early Church Rejected Philosophy

Yet the first-century apostles rejected philosophy to interpret Scripture: "None of the early Christian apologists [defenders of the faith] paid any attention to a doctrine like this" (Gods and the One God, Grant, ch. 12).

One source best describes how Paul viewed philosophical reasoning: "Metaphysics [a branch of philosophy focused on origins] and speculative theories were valueless for Paul; he was conscious of a mighty power transforming his own life and filling him with joy, and that this power was identical with Jesus of Nazareth he knew. In all this Paul is the representative of that

which is highest and best in early Christianity. Speculation and hyperspiritualization were ever tending to obscure this religious fact…" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 6, p. 284).

In Colossians 2:8, Paul warns against philosophy, calling it a vain and worldly deceit: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

Paul goes on to condemn asceticism: "Wherefore if you be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are you subject to [human] ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh" (vs. 20-23).

In I Timothy 6:20-21, Paul is even more direct: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to your trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called which some professing have erred concerning the faith." The Greek word for "science" is Gnosis. Clearly, Paul condemns Gnosticism. And his example reflected the position of the first-century Church in condemning all philosophy in general.

The Gates of Nicaea

Romans 1 describes the ancient philosophers' rejection of the true God and His authority, while at the same time engaging in vile sexual conduct (vs. 18-32). Inspired by God, Paul describes their philosophical conclusions as abominations as much as were their perverse and promiscuous lifestyles.

But the Christianity that had come to dominate by the third and fourth centuries exalted these philosophers. Their human reasoning and speculation were seen as pillars of understanding that would interpret Scripture.

The Council of Nicaea

In the early 300s, during the most severe persecution against all who claimed to be Christian, the Roman armies proclaimed Constantine, their favorite general, to be Caesar. Constantine defeated Maxentius in the Battle of Milvian Bridge outside Rome.

Before battle, Constantine claimed he had a vision of the first two letters of Christ's name (in

Greek, chi [X] and rho [P]) on a banner, with a voice stating, "By this sign you will conquer." Taking these as symbolic of God's favor, Constantine felt indebted to Christianity for his victory—despite being a dedicated sun worshipper!

Upon becoming emperor, he immediately issued the Edict of Toleration, which made Christianity legal throughout the empire. This ended 10 years of severe persecution against the true Church—but it also paved the way for the Catholic brand of Christianity, centered in Rome, to rise to preeminence throughout the Empire (The History of the Church of God, Kelly, part 4).

Constantine recognized the political benefit of aligning with Christianity. Not only did he credit it for establishing him as Emperor, he understood its potential for unifying the empire.

Yet the Christianity of the Western Empire was very different from that in the East and of the other small sects in North Africa. So Constantine took measures to "standardize" his new ally.

The Pivotal Council of Nicaea

The Council of Nicaea, the first ecumenical council of the Catholic Church, was conducted at Constantine's imperial summer residence in Nicaea of Bithynia, from May 20 until July 25, AD 325. Most of the 318 delegates came from the eastern part of the empire, which was generally more conservative.

Numerous items were on the agenda. One was secular enforcement of laws adopted by the church, as promised by Constantine once unity was established. This would be achieved by healing the growing rift between advocates of the trinity and the Arian movement.

Another issue was a law forcing celibacy on the clergy. But the council rejected it in favor of defending the sanctity of marriage. There were elements in the empire that resisted the innovations that the clergy in Rome advocated. Later, of course, their influence steadily diminished.

The Council of Nicaea officially "admitted the principle that the state might employ the secular arm to bring...Christian subjects of the Roman world-empire under the newly codified faith" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 19, p. 640). This meant that, as protector of the only recognized form of Christianity in the empire, Constantine held authority to force everyone—pagans and all brands of Christianity—into conformity or exile.

The greatest controversy at the Council of Nicaea involved the nature of God and how the trinity was decreed to be doctrine in the Roman Empire. This controversy flared throughout the debates and continued even after the final decision. Inroads, though shaky, were made for the approval of a compromised version of the trinity. (But it was not until AD 381, at the Council of Constantinople, that the Catholic Church finally adopted the Nicene Creed, which officially approved the trinity doctrine.)

Constantine, from a bust in Rome

Opposing Sides

There were two opposing sides at Nicaea. One was represented by Arius, the other by Athanasius. Both men came from the same congregation in

Alexandria, Egypt. Arius was a priest, and 43 years older than Athanasius, who was a deacon. Both were influenced by the speculative mindset of Greek philosophy: "Arius (250-336) had received his theological education in the school of the presbyter Lucian of Antioch [in Syria], a learned man, and distinguished especially as a biblical scholar…Lucian…persisted in holding that the Logos became a person in Christ" (ibid., vol. 2, p. 543).

Lucian—one of the most sound and capable teachers of that time—had compiled what became known as the Received Text, the authentic Greek manuscripts of the canonized New Testament Scriptures. His preservation of the Hebrew scriptures in Greek is also significant. Erasmus, the foremost Catholic scholar in history, strongly favored Lucian's texts over Jerome's spurious Latin translation, known as the Vulgate.

During and after the Council of Nicaea, the Catholic position was that all who denied the trinity were effectively denying Christ's divinity. But Lucian's teachings proved this false. He had strongly advocated (as does the Bible) Christ's divinity before He came in the flesh. Lucian rejected the philosophical trappings of the trinity. He was strictly scriptural in the tradition of the apostles, and was himself considered a "Judaizer."

On the one side was Arius, who studied under Lucian, and compromised. He leaned toward the teachings of Paul of Samosata.

On the other hand, Athanasius (AD 295-373) followed the philosophy of Origen. As a Platonist and Stoic, Origen was the antithesis of Lucian.

The Council of Nicaea brought to a head the leading proponents of opposite extremes: Lucian and his strict, literal biblical interpretation vs. Origen and his speculative philosophy. This was potentially an opportunity for biblical reasoning—Arius—to face off with a renowned champion of human reasoning—Athanasius—who would represent the deceased Origen, who died about 40 years before Athanasius was born.

As is so often the case, true biblical teaching was not properly represented. Arius sold out his biblical training and brought his own unscriptural thinking, maintaining that Christ had to be a created Being and had not been God prior to becoming flesh. Defining Christ as a created Being, Arius deduced that a member of the true Godhead could never dwell among sinful mankind. This became the greatest weakness in his thinking and became the basis for the rejection of his views at Nicaea.

Both sides departed from the Bible, but in different ways. The movement that contributed to Catholic thought, represented by Origen's vast writings, even more blatantly distorted Scripture. Through the centuries, proponents of this thinking have remained unswerving from their original foundations—holding to tradition without deviation. (Remember Jeremiah 2:11-13.)

The opposing sides took weeks to present their views. Abstract terms to define the mysterious state of the trinity were a source of constant confusion. Consider just one example of the utter nonsense at work in the process that produced a manmade god: "A great trouble arose, since there are two terms in Greek of historical fame. The first, homos, meaning 'identical' and the second, homoios, meaning 'similar' or 'like unto'…The spelling of these words is much alike. The difference in meaning, when applied to the Godhead, is bewildering to simplehearted [sane] believers. Nevertheless, those who would think in terms of homoiousian, or 'similar,' instead of homoousian, or 'identical' were promptly labeled as heretics and Arians by the clergy. Yet when the emperor, Constantine, in full assembly of the Council of Nicaea, asked Hosius, the presiding bishop, what the difference was between the two terms, Hosius replied that they were both alike. At this all but a few bishops broke out into laughter and teased the chairman with heresy" (Truth Triumphant, Wilkinson, p. 92).

Athanasius' position centered on the belief that Christ was a God Being, having always existed before becoming human. True! But many considered his philosophical extrapolations—from Origen—to be confusing theory and conjecture. Of course they were. Athanasius' greatest advantage was that Arius sought to defend what the majority believed indefensible.

Disagreement Continues

Debate flared throughout and continued even after a compromised trinity was selected. After opposing views had been presented, each side continued to lobby and position itself for weeks behind the scenes. Most delegates were unimpressed with either argument, both of which were considered extreme. Athanasius was opposed by many delegates from the East. The majority, still somewhat influenced by remnants of the true Church, was more conservative.

Finally, as the Nicaean Council ended, most voted for Athanasius, not because they agreed with him, but as the lesser of two evils. Most considered both sides unacceptable. The outcome is best described here: "In the main they perpetuated the line of Origen" (ibid., vol. 19, p. 641). The emperor demanded one position win, and he wanted to follow the majority decision—either way. He was also determined to enforce it. Sensing where the decision was going, participants made it almost unanimous (300 out of 318) because they feared death or exile if they were on the wrong side of the outcome, not because they thought it was right!

Eventual Acceptance

Think carefully. It is incredible that the decision—any "decision"—by men regarding the nature of the God of the Universe was born in such an environment, but it was. It is time for some questions: Does this seem acceptable? Do you think God would do it this way? Will you care?

The council's decision spelled trouble for Arius and his allies, who were banished for a time. Arians and semi-Arians were temporarily out of favor. Yet this would change in a few years. The considerable conflict that simmered between the disputing parties would be resolved decades later at the Council of Constantinople. It was then that the trinity would become a central teaching of the church at Rome.

The only time Arianism threatened to return was during the rule of Emperor Valens, who had attempted to revive it—but without success. After Valens' reign, Arianism, which had already been rejected by the Roman church, was officially rejected by the empire.

As a footnote in history, the Arian movement "lived to flourish anew among the Germanic tribes at the time of the great migrations [5th century and afterwards]. Goths, Vandals, Suebi, Burgundians and Langobardi embraced it; here to a distinctive national type of Christianity…" (ibid., Vol. 2, p. 544). While Arianism diminished from view during the middle ages, it was resurrected by Adolph Hitler to promote pride and nationalism in Nazi Germany at the time of World War II. Once again, this "distinctive national type of Christianity" was hailed by Germanic peoples. Under the Nazis, "Arianism" was transformed into "Aryanism"—a racial term proclaiming the superiority of Germanic peoples, rather than a doctrine or creed.

The Adopted Creed

The famous Nicene Creed was not strongly trinitarian when compared to later Catholic writings. It devoted little comment to defining the Father, and even less to defining the Spirit. The majority of the Creed explains the exact definition of Christ, refuting what Arius had advocated. But the Creed did lay the groundwork for a stronger definition to be made later. Most trinitarian

language had to be removed from the council's decision to win the delegates' approval.

The Nicene Creed, principally drawn up in AD 325, was a revision of a creed written earlier that year by Eusebius of Caesarea, historian and close confidant of Constantine. Later revisions reflected additions made primarily at the Council of Constantinople.

The Nicene Creed reads:

I. We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, the maker of all things visible and invisible.

II. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, both those in heaven and those on earth. Who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate, and was made man, And suffered, And rose the third day, Ascended into heaven, Is coming to judge quick and dead.

III. And in the Holy Ghost (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 7, pp. 395-396).

Holy Spirit Moves Toward Personhood

Notice the very sparse wording of the third section: "And [we believe] in the Holy Ghost." There was a reason for this. Many originally opposed longer draft versions of the Creed, which included more about Origen's viewpoint concerning the Holy Spirit, because they could not go along with the strongly trinitarian views. After Nicaea, theologians who advocated the trinity became bolder and more explicit in enforcing their belief within the empire—and that it meant that the Holy Spirit was a third person. By AD 381, at the Council of Constantinople (56 years after Nicaea), the trinity was largely in place.

The philosophies of Origen prevailed. Remember, this man was an extremely unbalanced Stoic who publicly castrated himself! Astonishing, but true!

After Nicaea, both Arius and Athanasius were alternately in and out of favor with the church hierarchy and Roman leaders. This highly unpredictable atmosphere was polluted by political favoritism, betrayal and backstabbing. Shifts in leadership could mean honor or ruin, depending on the political landscape at the time. One could be elevated one year and banished the next. Even Origen had been subject to this—venerated for a time and fleeing for his life soon after.

(Numerous versions of the creed have been in circulation through the centuries. A popular and far stronger creed, fraudulently attributed to Athanasius, was found to have been drawn up in the fifth century. Its language was much more explicit than could have been approved at Nicaea in AD 325. It is generally recognized that Catholic theologians and historians modify history according to personal liking.)

It took many years for this doctrine to become deeply ingrained in Catholic thought. Eventually it took hold and has stayed firmly in place, so much so that none of the Protestant sects that separated during the 1500s ever questioned its validity. It had become blindly accepted, despite its completely unbiblical origins. The Protestant acceptance of this doctrine is succinctly expressed in this way: "In regard to the Trinity, Protestantism has nothing very new to say…" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 26, p. 780).

The Long Road to Embracing a Triad Deity

Regarding the trinity, there is a distinct difference between the beliefs of the original first-century Church, led by the apostles, and the church that developed later, as influenced by Greek philosophy and other schools of thought. Although historical evidence of this transition was

deliberately shaded, sufficient details remain to confirm what actually happened.

Shortly before his martyrdom in AD 68, Paul admonished, "But continue you in the things which you have learned and have been assured of, KNOWING OF WHOM YOU HAVE LEARNED THEM" (II Tim. 3:14).

Paul was stressing to those of Christ's true Church the vital importance of continuing in what they had already learned, and to remember the source of all truth—Christ and the apostles. Paul knew that the apostles' teachings and principles were timeless. They did not need to be updated, modified or allegorized by self-proclaimed teachers, philosophers, scholars, poets and "prophets." That body of true knowledge—distinct from Greek philosophy or any other source—was to be retained and practiced.

The leading contributors to trinitarian thought were devoted to Platonism and other forms of human wisdom. They considered the Bible to be of secondary importance, interpreting Scripture as allegories revealing philosophical principles they saw as infinitely more profound than God's inspired Word. The philosophy of men appealed to the intellectual vanity of theologians who were Christian in name only. They created a system that emerged with growing momentum well before the time of Constantine.

When the Council of Nicaea convened, the Catholic movement had already purged most of the last vestiges of those labeled "Judaizers"—the faithful who upheld Scriptural authority. The way was now clear to implement long-coveted speculative ideas of Greek philosophy.

After Nicaea, emboldened theologians were free to upgrade and refine the trinity to its full definition, as taught by Origen. And they did this with little hesitation.

Origen had defined the theological boundaries of their playing field. Read and reread this stunning acknowledgement of Origen's influence on the birth, development and entrenchment of the trinity: "Orthodox theology has never, in any of the confessions, ventured beyond the circle which the mind of Origen first measured out" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 20, p. 270).

He and his predecessors truly defined the god that millions—even billions!—would worship for the nearly 17 centuries to present.

The history of the trinity has been one of blood, murder and savagery—of intolerance and condemnation—and of total blind allegiance and conviction.

As Catholic influence spread in the Middle Ages across Europe and beyond, great numbers of people were forced to accept the trinity under pain of death. Like the spread of Islam by the edge of the sword, with infidels routinely slashed to death, this enforcement was by the point of the sword, where Christian infidels were usually pierced to death. This is its own statement about the triad "god" and its "fruits" (Matt. 7:16, 20). Then there are the thousands who died in ignorance fighting on behalf of a trinity they never understood.

But there is more—much more—to consider!

Addressing the Confusion

The world of professing Christianity is broken into thousands of disagreeing and competing denominations and sects. This is because beliefs vary so widely between groups. Some focus on the way they spread their "gospel" message (but with none of them teaching anything that even begins to resemble the gospel Christ brought). Others center around events that happened on the original New Testament Pentecost of AD 31. Yet others stress the importance of the proper mode of baptism. Every church seems to have its own pet beliefs where it is willing to diverge from all others.

One exception is found in almost every branch of modern Christianity—belief in the three-in-one god! It is practically the only teaching that links every church—from Baptists to Catholics, from Anglicans to Presbyterians, from Methodists to Lutherans, even many Sabbath keepers. All worship the trinity!

How central is this teaching to traditional Christianity?: "Many scholars believe the doctrine of the Trinity is the most crucial element in the Christian understanding of God" (Nelson's Illustrated Manners and Customs of the Bible).

In Chapter Five, we will demonstrate that the Bible does not, and never could, support the teaching of the trinity. However, confusion and human reasoning must first be addressed and removed from the subject. This involves examining the logic that produced it.

Ask: Could thousands of disagreeing, competing denominations, divergent in so many beliefs, somehow manage to reach the correct answer on the trinity? Has Christianity somehow been able to correctly identify the right foundation—the true God of the Bible—but only found confusion atop that foundation? Could all these churches disagree on basically every doctrine, yet unanimously stumble upon the truth about God? The answer is an obvious no!

An even greater question arises: If all these churches were serving the correct God, why has He left them so divided about the many truths of His Word? The answer lies in the fact that because they do not serve the true God, they have been left in near complete confusion. They are cut off from right understanding on almost every point of biblical teaching. And with new versions of Christianity appearing regularly, confusion only worsens.

The true God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33). He commands all who follow Him to worship Him "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24). To do this, one must understand who and what He is. This means first learning what He is not.

The Bible shows that this world is cut off from the true God (Isa. 59:1-2). Yet we saw that the Bible declares that there is a "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4). This cut-off condition is why we will discover an amazing lack of understanding in a series of quotes from those attempting to explain the trinity.

As you read, you will see why the triune godhead is dangerous!

Illogical Logic

We saw in Chapter Three that this theory is embedded in ancient philosophy. But how was the trinity explained so that the masses would accept it? How exactly was it taught so that laypeople would believe it?

The difficulty in explaining the trinity has engendered many schools of thought—many types of trinitarian godheads.

You must understand the logic and reasoning used to "sell" the triune god. For 17 centuries, professing Christianity has attempted to do this.

Using statements straight from the mouths of trinitarians, we will see how they describe their god. It will be apparent that their greatest belief is blind faith. Their explanations defy logic—and are usually so convoluted that they are even difficult to read! Debunking their faulty reasoning will serve as important setup to why the trinity is unbiblical.

We will break down the supposed definitions and expose the error—and show how arguments lack even the most basic logic, and are the source of the confusion. You will find astonishing how little the Bible is referenced. (Chapter Five examines in-depth the supposed biblical proofs —and the many scriptures that refute the so-called "proof texts.")

Since God is not working with the world at large—since it is cut off from Him—it follows that the world would be cut off from His understanding. Notice what Christ stated: "Jesus answered and said, I thank You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes" (Matt. 11:25). The "wise" and "schooled" of this world just cannot understand God. Yet the truth about the real God of the Bible can be easily understood by the average person, if God has opened his or her mind.

Would the Creator of the universe command, "You shall have no other gods before Me" and leave it to human reasoning to determine who He is? God's Word plainly shows that man, by himself, is not capable of understanding spiritual matters (I Cor. 2:10; Prov. 14:12; Jer. 10:23).

God's purpose for mankind—and you—can be understood, but first we must deconstruct the house of cards built by the "wise and prudent" about God's nature.

The Trinity Defined?

Many profess to believe in the triune godhead without understanding what it means—how it is defined. The simplest explanation is that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are three members of the godhead, co-existing as one entity—in essence, God is three persons in a single being.

Most people declare that God's Word is the source of their beliefs. Remember, the word "trinity" appears nowhere in Scripture. This creates an obvious problem, resulting in two schools of thought—two responses. One group acknowledges this fact, but reasons around it. The other forces the Bible to say what it does not.

Most churchgoers simply accept the explanations presented by their clergy, never taking the time to examine them. Many seem perfectly willing to assume they worship the right God.

Let's revisit a statement from the INTRODUCTION uttered by a famous television evangelist: "When I first began to study the Bible years ago, the doctrine of the Trinity was one of the most complex problems I had to encounter. I have never fully resolved it, for it contains an aspect of mystery. Though I do not totally understand it to this day, I accept it as a revelation of God…To explain and illustrate the Trinity is one of the most difficult assignments to a Christian."

To clarify this "mystery," many theologians attempt to explain the trinity in theological terms. As we examine a series of quotes, ask, "Where is the Bible in their logic?"

The first quote comes from the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. Rest assured that it was not mistyped. Neither is it even the most ridiculous nonsense you will be forced to read: "The doctrine of the Trinity lies in Scripture in solution; when it is crystallized from its solvent it does not cease to be Scriptural, but only comes into clearer view. Or, to speak without figure, the doctrine of the Trinity is given to us in Scripture, not in formulated definition, but in fragmentary allusions; when we assemble the disjecta membra [meaning: scattered fragments] into their organic unity, we are not passing from Scripture, but entering more thoroughly into the meaning of Scripture. We may state the doctrine in technical terms, supplied by philosophical reflection..." ("The Term 'Trinity'").

We promised that some explanations were not only confusing, but even difficult to read! Such "theological" gibberish leaves one almost breathless—dazzled by its sheer confusion! Is this quote a study in Latin? Is it about organic farming? Is it philosophy? Is it mere allusion, but in "fragments?" Or is this quote about chemistry? Do not laugh at the suggestion of chemistry. You will momentarily see why.

More seriously, this explanation asserts that the Bible reveals the trinity in "fragmentary allusions," not plainly. One must use "philosophical reflection" to deduce what the trinity is. This contradicts verses we have seen. Man, on his own, cannot understand spiritual matters! In fact, our natural thoughts are hostile to what God teaches: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against [Greek: hostile to] God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). Spiritual matters must derive from, and be explained by, the Bible—not created through the logic of hopelessly confused men.

Now a famous quote by "Saint" Gregory Nazianzen about the trinity that combines philosophy, poetry and prose, with a heavy dose of abstract nonsense: "No sooner do I conceive of the One than I am illumined by the splendor of the Three; no sooner do I distinguish Them than I am carried back to the One. When I think of any One of the Three I think of Him as the Whole, and my eyes are filled, and the greater part of what I am thinking escapes me...When I contemplate the Three together, I see but one torch, and cannot divide or measure out the Undivided Light" (A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers..., Philip Schaff, Henry Wace).

The next source attempts to use "metaphysical" concepts to explain God's nature: "The essence is not exclusive to only one of these at a time…The essence is not divisible among the distinctions of persons but indivisible" (Let Us Reason Ministries). Again, this makes absolutely no sense—and you should take heart if you had no idea what it said!

The quote goes further, reducing God to a mere chemical formula, and Christianity to a "controlled experiment." Notice: "It is a fact of chemistry that plain water, when placed in a vacuum under gas pressure of 230 millimeters and at a temperature of 0 degrees Centigrade, [will] solidify into ice at the bottom of the container, the liquid will remain in the center and at the top it vaporizes! At a given moment the same water is both solid, liquid and gas, yet all three are manifestations of the same base substance H2O...Can't the Creator of this substance be Father, Son and Holy Spirit—three Persons and one Nature as Spirit without violating the law of logic or reason?" (ibid.).

Does the reader have any doubt that God gave men over to minds void of judgment (Rom. 1:28) that they could write such statements?

One obvious big fault with this recipe-style "module" is that God cannot be defined solely by

His Creation.

Think for a moment. This argument depends on fixed levels of gas pressure and temperature in a vacuum. God, who is Spirit (John 4:24), is not restrained or governed by physical, scientific laws (chemistry or otherwise). Christ walked on water (Matt. 14:25), turned water into wine (John 2:7-10), read minds (Matt. 9:4; 12:25; Luke 5:22; 11:17), walked through walls (John 20:26), raised the dead (Matt. 9:25; John 11:43-44), was Himself raised from the dead (Matt. 28:7; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:6) and defied gravity (Acts 1:9). Miracles cannot be explained by human logic or reason. And it was God who set into motion all the laws governing the universe, not the other way around. (Study Job 38.)

Seeing the Creator by His Creation

Again, the Bible declares, "…The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20). There are patterns in creation that mirror the patterns in the Spirit world. This is also stated in Corinthians and Hebrews. But completely defining aspects of the spirit realm by the physical world is just not valid.

One can understand how God thinks—or patterns of the spirit world—by things that are made. For instance, structure-oriented people typically build houses with straight lines and clear rooms. It is their nature to think in that way. Artistically-oriented people would include more angles, spaces and alcoves. This is their nature.

Trinitarian Symbolism

The Equilateral Triangle symbol of the trinity: The three distinct angles combine to make one complete figure.

The Circle and Triangle symbol suggests the eternity of the trinity.

The All-Seeing Eye symbol is supposedly the all-seeing eye of God, looking out from the triangle of the trinity.

The Triquetra: Early symbol of the trinity. The three equal arcs express an eternity, continuous form, indivisibility in their "interweaving," and their center is a triangle—the ancient trinity symbol.

The pagan fish images were interlinked to symbolize the individuals within the trinity.

Shield of the trinity: Three curving sides, exactly equal in length, carry the Latin words "is not." The short straight bands carry the word "is." The outer circles bear the words "Father," "Son," "Holy Spirit," while the inner circle is "God."

The Three Intertwining Circles: These indicate the doctrine of the equality, unity and coeternal nature of the three persons of the trinity.

To understand how God thinks—His nature—examine His "products." He is also a Creator. So we can gain insight into Him by examining what He has created. If you look at the laws of nature, they exemplify precision and structure. There is beauty and elegance in the natural world. Everything has a place so that proper order and balance is maintained. This is what can be discerned from creation. But this is not what the previous quote said. The writer attempts to define God by a law of science—effectively constraining Him by it. God defines and limits laws,

they do not define and limit Him.

Describing the beings in the triune god, Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary states, "each esteems and defers to the other in a way that makes the original family of the trinity a model for the Christian family of believers in the church…The key to unlocking the mystery of the trinity is to observe how the persons of the triune family give themselves to one another in selfless love. They are always at one another's disposal. The Father serves the Son; the Son serves the Father; Father and Son defer to the Holy Spirit, who in turn, serves and defers to the Father and Son in a oneness that is eternally dynamic and inexhaustible."

On the surface, this explanation feels good, because it appeals to love and family. But reading it logically, it says that nothing would ever be done by God. If each person defers to others, it creates a kind of an infinite loop. It would be a never-ending "passing of the buck." Like traditional families or corporations, one person must be in charge. Only one person can lead. In a company, it is the CEO—in a family, it is the husband/father. Without a leader, no decisions can be made and nothing can ever be accomplished. Without one member of the godhead leading, there would have been no Creation because each member would be deferring to the others.

Carefully scrutinizing statements from theologians shows that they appeal to feelings or emotions, not sound logical analysis—and certainly not the soundness of Scripture (II Tim. 1:7)!

This source also claims, "All the remaining New Testament books [not quoted here] contain Trinity teaching except James and 3 John. The triune family is God's revelation of Himself as the ultimate truth about reality. This family is the original pattern from which God creates all the families of earth with their unity and diversity. The family of mankind, after losing its intimate relationship with the divine family at the Fall, is restored to fellowship by God's action. This happens when its members acknowledge the generosity originating in the Father, expressed by the Son, and energized by the Holy Spirit."

This generates many questions, including: Why is a family known for its diversity? What was "God's action"? What does the "ultimate truth about reality" mean? Besides the outright falsehood of the trinity being all throughout the New Testament, there is no reality anywhere in the statement. In no way does the triune godhead represent the human family. (A later chapter will explain how the human family relates to the true Godhead.)

Typical of such statements, this quote uses lofty all-encompassing terms that appeal to vanity. Remember, Paul wrote that those who reject God "profess themselves to be wise" (Rom. 1:22). Those who hear such statements do not wish to be seen as "little thinkers." Wanting to "get it," they accept assertions like the "ultimate truth about reality," when such phrases mean nothing!

As we have seen several times, a methodical analysis of these statements shows that they generate more questions than answers. Never permit such statements to mislead you. See them for what they are. Some are so convoluted they seem almost meant to be confusing —meant to be illogical. In the end, most give up and accept them, succumbing to vanity or fear of seeming unintelligent.

God commands us to understand who He is. He instructs, "PROVE Me now herewith" (Mal. 3:10). Christians are also told this in I Thessalonians 5:21. Another translation of this verse can be rendered: "But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good" (NASB). Surely "everything" includes identifying the true God from all impostors!

Blurred, Convoluted and Hidden

The trinity "doctrine" is never explained in plain English. Instead of clear explanations, concepts such as "monoarchianism," "subordinationism" and "tritheism" are presented. Each of these is as convoluted and confusing as it sounds. Therefore, we will not waste time delving into them.

Because the trinity mystery cannot be explained, theologians declare with pride that it cannot be understood! Notice: "That is to say, it embodies a truth which has never been discovered, and is indiscoverable, by natural reason. With all his searching, man has not been able to find out for himself the deepest things of God" ("Purely a Revealed Doctrine," International Standard Bible Encyclopedia).

Yet we have seen God commands us to prove Him!

If you were to demand biblical support for the trinity teaching, you would find that trinitarians focus only on a few scriptural passages, and even then take them completely out of context and contort them to say something they clearly do not say.

Vanity causes theologians and scholars to fancy themselves as having particularly deep minds. In the name of supporting the "trinitarian mystery," there has developed an almost fascination to "sign on" to it with their own statements that basically declare their ignorance. The process has taken on a life of its own and created a mountain of nonsense. Consider the following: "The mind of man cannot fully understand the mystery of the Trinity. He who would try to understand the mystery fully will lose his mind. But he who would deny the Trinity will lose his soul" (Harold Lindsell and Charles J. Woodbridge, A Handbook of Christian Truth, pp. 51-52).

Consider the implications of the previous two quotes. The second adds an even more powerful dimension to—actually an indictment of—those who would try to sort out the trinitarian convolution instead of docilely accepting it. The writer advises that, rather than studying to find the truth, one should just take the word of learned authorities. The problem? These admit they have no idea. The above statements should be cause for concern in the minds of those who simply accept the trinity doctrine at face value.

The apostle John wrote, "Believe not every spirit, but try [or test] the spiritsWHETHER THEY ARE OF GOD: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). The trinity is entirely related to the spirit realm. Surely, this would be the first spirit that the seeker of truth would "test." Remember, God states, "PROVE Me now herewith" (Mal. 3:10).

The apostle Paul also stated, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). Consider further: Christians are promised salvation. Are they never to understand in this life the God with whom they will spend eternity?

Also, in II Timothy 1:7, Paul wrote, "For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." If the Holy Spirit brings Christians sound-mindedness, then insanity—to "lose his mind"—could not possibly result from understanding what God is.

Finally, the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia states what should now be obvious (under the subject "No Rational Proof of It"): "As the doctrine of the Trinity is indiscoverable by reason, so it is incapable of proof from reason." Utterly amazing! This pro-trinity source states that you cannot apply either reason or proof to the subject of God's nature.

Quotes like the last two destroy the trinity's credibility. When understood, proponents of the trinity become the best proof against it—the very best reason to reject it!

More Logic Problems

Some underlying logic problems surface. For instance, assume that the trinity is true. This presents a grave dilemma. How does the Father send the Son if they are the same being? Jesus said, "…I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which has sent Me" (John 5:30).

How did the Father send Jesus if they are the same being? Was Jesus speaking poetically? If the Father did not literally send Him, meaning Jesus remained inextricably bound with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the verse loses its meaning. Would God expect us to "see through" what is mere poetic analogy?

Also, we could ask: How could Christ do the will of His Father if they were the same? Would He not be doing His own will? How would two-thirds of such a godhead (the Father and Holy Spirit) defer to a pseudo-human Christ while He was on Earth for 33½ years?

Further, if the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are a single Being, how did—how could—one-third of one being die? Some have suggested the only conclusion the trinity permits is that there are two Christs. One has been called the "glorified psychic Christ," or what could be thought of as a kind of pre-determined divine carcass sent to Earth for the purpose of dying on the stake—and the other the "infinite eternal Christ" who remained locked in the godhead. Two Christs means four beings in the godhead. Of course, this rhetorical discussion is ridiculous! But understand that there are at least one of two problems with the trinity: (1) It requires two Christs, or (2) one-third of a single being found a way to die.

Do not let trinitarians tell you that you must accept this mystery on faith. What has been called a mystery is simply ludicrous, and something that reasonable minds should reject! Are you better understanding why trinitarians state that to understand this teaching would cause one to "lose his mind"?

Let's go further: To where did Jesus ascend if He were already part of the trinity (John 3:13)—if He had remained in heaven all along? Did the one Christ ascend and merge into the other Christ?

There is still another problem. How could Jesus now be our Mediator (I Tim. 2:5) and High Priest in forgiveness of sins if He is one part of a single being, meaning all parts would be in agreement where mercy is required? Christ would be mediating to the other two-thirds of the same mind.

And the Bible says that Christ sits at the Father's right hand (Matt. 22:44). How does a third of one being sit at the right hand of another third of that same being? How wonderful that such impossibilities can be swept away by the mantra, "Remember, it is a mystery!"

Grave Problems

While all the explanations shown are ridiculous to the point of humorous, there is something sinister hidden within the overall problem of the trinity. If Jesus Christ did not actually die, but remained alive within the trinity—THEN MANKIND HAS NO SAVIOR!

Paul wrote, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Christ had to literally DIE to satisfy this penalty.

Without a Savior, we are all "yet in our sins [still under the death penalty]" (I Cor. 15:17). All have no hope of a future resurrection. If that were the case, as Paul stated, "We are of all men most miserable" (vs. 19). In verse 32, Paul shows that if this life is all we have to look forward to, we might as well "eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die" without hope.

Toying with who and what God is becomes a dangerous exercise—one more fraught with problems than most recognize!

It is human nature to make what is simple complex. Of course, God understood this tendency when He arranged His Word. We have seen that the Bible is written, "Here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept" (Isa. 28:10).

The ancient Corinthians had fallen into confusing what is simple. Notice what Paul wrote:

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:3).

Since God instructs His people to prove what they believe, He would never expect them to guess at doctrines so central to Christianity. And whether and how you and I have a Savior is central to Christianity! Therefore, God must supply His servants with plain answers on all matters crucial to salvation. This includes who He is!

The doctrines of God are simple to understand when all related verses are assembled. There is simplicity in Christ—but there is nothing simple about the trinity or the "Christ" within it.

Should God's Nature be Complex?

The confusion created by this doctrine is widespread. Even among trinitarians, there is broad disagreement about details of God's nature. Let's ask again: Should there exist this much confusion about something so fundamental?

Paul told the true Church of God: "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10).

In light of just this passage, do you still think God, or His people, tolerates, confusion and division? Think this through. First, God's people—"brethren"—are together, and perfectly joined together. There is to be no division among them. Reread the verse.

The Church where the living Jesus Christ is the Head (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18) is unified on all matters of doctrine. His Church speaks the same thing all the time on all points. The "believe whatever you want" policy in the world of traditional Christianity does not match I Corinthians 1:10!

Instead of the trinity being simple, we have seen it is one of the most complex ideas promulgated by modern Christianity, and we will soon see that it is entirely lacking any biblical support.

No Scriptural Support

Even the Catholic church candidly admits that the trinity must be spoken of with "qualifiers." Notice how the New Catholic Encyclopedia talks about this teaching: "…one should not speak of Trinitarianism in the New Testament without serious qualification…when one does speak of an unqualified Trinitarianism, one has moved from the period of Christian origins to, say, the last quadrant of the 4th century. It was only then that what might be called the definitive Trinitarian dogma 'one God in three Persons' became thoroughly assimilated into Christian life and thought. Herein lies the difficulty. On the one hand, it was the dogmatic formula 'one God in three Persons' that would henceforth for more than 15 centuries structure and guide the Trinitarian essence of the Christian message…On the other hand, the formula itself does not reflect the immediate consciousness of the period of origins; it was the product of three centuries of doctrinal development."

This is an astonishing admission!

In other words, the "three beings in one God" idea did not originate with the New Testament Church. Neither Christ nor the original 12 apostles taught it, including Paul. The New Catholic Encyclopedia virtually admits this, declaring openly that the idea was derived from outside Scripture!

We saw that the trinity doctrine slowly formed in the minds of professing Christians—actually

professing Christian philosophers—for about 300 years. As the centuries passed, complex arguments and theories developed. Various confusing assertions were stated. It was not until the fourth century that the trinity became the official doctrine of the great universal church—and it remains the foundation of professing Christianity today!

Why did Christ not reveal to the apostles that He was part of a trinity when He worked with them directly for three and a half years during His ministry? And did He expect that all those who would later come to believe "all things whatsoever I have commanded you [the apostles]" (Matt. 28:19-20) would have to wait three centuries for a group of philosophers to explain to them the nature of the God they were to serve?

Ridiculous!

A Convenient "God"

Another reason the trinity god appeals to so many is that it teaches that Christ and the Holy Spirit work in our stead—rather than Christ working in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. When understood, this teaching relieves "Christians" of the need to do anything—other than just "accept Jesus." How often have you heard this expression?

Trinitarians ignore passages such as Philippians 2:13: "For it is God which works in you both TO WILL and TO DO of His good pleasure." But before we look at the details of God's Master Plan for you, we must open God's Word and look for the trinity.

Many theologians admit the Bible does not teach the trinity, but then turn right around and twist verses into supposed proofs of it. They base beliefs on a few verses taken out of context and misapplied.

The next chapter will look at the so-called "proof texts" and dissect them. Careful and thorough examination of these "proofs" is essential.

We must thoroughly establish that the trinity has never stood on a foundation of Scripture!

What the Bible Teaches

You have learned that almost none of the scholarly explanations of the trinity come from the Bible, but are rather derived from philosophers and theologians. We also learned that politics within the Roman Empire played a role in what we know today as the trinity.

There could be no more important doctrine than the nature of God. To understand and worship the WRONG GOD is tantamount to building one's entire religion by starting with a wrong premise—building on a wrong foundation!

The author of the Bible—the all-powerful Creator—would surely leave an explanation in His Word of Who and What He is. The Bible offers explanations of every doctrine mentioned within its pages. Notice Psalm 12:6: "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." This would of course include what He has written about Himself, and would also have to be sufficiently thorough for His followers to know exactly WHO they were following. They would also be equipped to know what gods they should not follow!

Through His Word, God teaches: the true gospel, the awesome potential of man, why the world is in a state of chaos, how world peace will come, what prophecy reveals lies ahead for mankind, what is human nature, who and what is the devil, the truth about angels, the nature of conversion, proper mode of baptism, financial laws, healing and laws of health—and many other truths.

Paul declared that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16). God perfectly explains each of the above subjects, and "purified them seven times" in His Word.

Of course He did the same with His own nature!

Let's see what Scripture reveals about the "doctrine" of God's nature. We will see what the Bible actually says by examining the scriptures cited to supposedly prove the trinity. This will be followed by an examination of passages disproving it.

Biblical Proof?

You may be asking, "Could all the churches of the world be wrong about God?" Eventually, everyone must face this fundamental question with an open mind—and then be willing to face the facts from the Bible.

Most professing Christians either overlook or do not know that there is no biblical proof for the trinity. They choose to "accept on faith" what is asserted from the pulpit.

Remember, the term "trinity" is found nowhere in Scripture. Nor are the phrases "three-in-one," "triune god" or any similar term. Let's establish this as an admission from trinitarians:

"The term 'Trinity' is not a Biblical term, and we are not using Biblical language when we define what is expressed by it as the doctrine" ("Trinity," International Standard Bible Encyclopedia).

Harper's Bible Dictionary adds this: "The word [trinity] does not occur in the Bible…The formal doctrine of the Trinity as it was defined by the great church councils of the fourth and fifth centuries is not to be found in the NT [New Testament]" (pp. 1098-1099).

Proponents of the trinity base their belief on a handful of passages, taken completely out of context. Let's examine them for their correct meaning.

I John 5:7-8

The thought-to-be "strongest" scripture supporting the trinity is I John 5:7-8: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

This passage appears to directly prove the trinity. But here is the truth. Transcribers who believed in the trinity concept added the bold italicized words to support their belief. Get this! These words are pure human invention! Those who believe them are either unaware the words were added, or know this but feel that their use serves the "greater good."

Most Bible margins directly state the truth of the passage. The New King James Version margin states, "NU, M [two authoritative texts] omit the words from in heaven (v. 7) [after "record"] through on earth (v. 8). Only four or five very late mss. [manuscripts] contain these words in Greek."

A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments says of this section that the verse was not found in the Latin Vulgate until the eighth century. The Interpreter's Bible states, "This verse in the KJV is to be rejected…It appears in no ancient Greek MS [manuscript]."

Adam Clarke, an avowed trinitarian, admits, "It is likely this verse is not genuine. It is wanting [missing] in every MS. [manuscript] of this epistle written before the invention of printing, one excepted, the Codex Montifortii, in Trinity College, Dublin: the others which omit this verse amount to one hundred and twelve" (Adam Clarke's Commentary).

Clarke continues, "It is wanting in both the Syriac, all the Arabic, Ethiopic, the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Slavonian...in all the ancient versions but the Vulgate; and even of this version many of the most ancient and correct MSS. have it not. It is wanting also in all the Greek fathers; and in most even of the Latin."

The Correct Translation—and Meaning

This passage should read, "There are three that bear record: the SPIRIT, and the WATER, and the BLOOD: and these three agree as one."

What is the meaning of "three that bear record"? To "bear record" or "bear witness" is to attest or testify to something. When a witness testifies in a courtroom, he is to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Therefore, these three elements of the conversion process "attest" that a person is indeed a Christian.

It works in the following way:

First, the SPIRIT. Romans 8:16-17 states, "The SPIRITITSELFbears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if

so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Verse 9 continues, "But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

It is by receiving the Holy Spirit that one is begotten by the Father. With this Spirit dwelling in the mind, one can begin to understand God's Word and Plan. Notice: "For what man knows the things of a man, save [by] the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knows no man, but [by] the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:11).

Now, the WATER. The death and burial symbolized by WATER baptism, preceding true conversion, is the means by which Christians show God their willingness to live a new life, to "put off…the old man" (Eph. 4:22; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:4-6) and walk "in newness of life." It also demonstrates faith in Christ's death and resurrection.

Last, the BLOOD. The BLOOD of Christ cleanses Christians from past sins (Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:12) upon repentance and baptism. (You may wish to read our booklets What Do You Mean Water Baptism? and What Is True Conversion? to learn more about this process.)

Matthew 28:19

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus gave His apostles instruction to "[baptize] in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Does this verse confirm the trinity? Scholars have universally misunderstood it.

First, let's understand basics of the verse. Think. Just because all three are named does not mean all three are persons. People name all sorts of things—mountains, buildings, pets, cars, boats, planes, estates, companies, inventions and many more.

This verse is not difficult. The Father and Son have a name and the Holy Spirit conveys or bears that name to His children.

Let's understand the baptism process more clearly.

The disciples were to baptize in the name of the Father, because it is the Father "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Eph. 3:15). The Father is the Head of His house—His family. Families traditionally carry a father's name. Also, it is the Father's goodness that leads one to recognize and repent of sins (Rom. 2:4).

The apostles were instructed to baptize in the name of the Son, because His death, in our stead, makes salvation possible (Rom. 5:8; II Pet. 3:9).

What about "In the Name…of the Holy Spirit"?

But they were also to baptize in the name of the Holy Spirit, because the Father uses that Spirit —His Spirit—as the power through which the begettal is performed (Rom. 8:16).

This is what the passage means! God gives Christians His Holy Spirit, which is His seed. When they receive that seed, it gives them God's name—they become heirs with Jesus Christ. From the point of conversion, Christians carry the name of God. When understood, this is why the name of the true Church has always been the "Church of God." The word "Church" (Greek: ekklesia) means "the called out ones." Human beings are called out of the world, begotten as God's children, put into His Church and given His name.

Note what John said about the "seed" within converted people: "Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (I John 3:9). How interesting that the Greek for "seed" is sperma, from which came the

English word “sperm.” The Holy Spirit is the “sperm” or “seed” of God. How plain!

Notice another scripture, adding light to what the seed of God is: “Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again [begotten], not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever” (I Pet. 1:22-23).

While true Christians will ultimately be born again into the kingdom of God at the resurrection, they are, at conversion, BEGOTTEN of God through the Holy Spirit. This is similar to the human reproductive system. As soon as the father’s sperm attaches to the egg of the mother, a child is conceived. The child is not yet born, although he is begotten of the physical seed—the father’s sperm. Christians, once they receive the Holy Spirit—the seed of God—are begotten in this life, but not yet born! Like any human father who would say that his wife is carrying his child, God speaks of the Church—described as the “Mother” of Christians (Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 12)—as carrying His children.

So then, Matthew 28:19 does not establish the trinity. It simply reveals that at baptism, one is given God’s name through His Spirit.

Romans 8:9

Let’s further examine the begettal process before returning to other scriptures. Notice Romans 8:9: “But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” This passage represents what could be called the Christian “DNA test.” Everyone recognizes that one must have a man’s genes to be his biological child. God is the same. Without God’s Spirit, one cannot be His begotten child.

Examining the process of human begettal sheds more light on the spiritual begettal process. In reproduction, an egg must be fertilized by a sperm cell, which then “seals off” the egg. The egg can never be fertilized by another sperm.

Now consider. Romans 8:9 spoke of Christians receiving in the same begettal the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. Are these two different Spirits? How does this fit with Christ saying, “I and My Father are One” (John 10:30)? If they were two different spirits, this still would not validate the trinity. It would mean that there are four, not three, beings—God and His Spirit and Christ and His Spirit—in the Godhead.

Upon baptism and the laying on of hands (the point at which one receives the Holy Spirit), Christians are begotten by the Father, just as Christ was begotten in Mary’s womb by the Father. Once begotten, Christ lives in them (Gal. 2:20). They then have the spirit of both Christ and the Father dwelling in them—which are one and the same Spirit. This Spirit enables Christians to take on the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5).

A Christian can, however, “abort” in this lifetime—if he does not continue in the right path. It is possible to lose the Holy Spirit, and bring the new begotten life to an end. Notice: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame” (Heb. 6:4-6).

John 14, 15 and 16—Trinity Not Taught by Christ

John 14, 15 and 16 contain verses cited most often as “proof” the Holy Spirit is a person. In

these accounts, Christ refers to it as "the Comforter." The masculine pronoun "he" is used for the word "Comforter" (Greek: parakletos). This pronoun comes from the grammatical nature of the Greek language in which the New Testament was written. Gender was not assigned to God's Spirit, but to the word used to describe it.

In the rest of the New Testament, the Greek word pneuma, meaning "breath" or "spirit," is translated "Spirit." It is equivalent to the Old Testament Hebrew word translated "spirit"—rûach. Grammatically, the word pneuma is neuter, and correctly represented by the pronoun "it."

We read earlier that Christ said, "I and My Father are One" (John 10:30). What does this mean? To understand what Christ meant, we must turn to the Old Testament.

Amos 3:3 asks a rhetorical question: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Jesus and the Father are of the same mind. They are unified in both thought and purpose. They agree. In John 10:30, Jesus did NOT say, "I, My Father and the Holy Spirit are One." If God is triune, why did Jesus ignore the Holy Spirit when explaining the Godhead relationship?

This is a huge unanswered question.

In John 14:9, Christ also said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." Did He mean that He and the Father look exactly alike? Obviously, by His actions, Christ revealed the Father. God and Christ are of the same mind. In Luke 2, He asked, "Know you not that I must be about My Father's business?" These scriptures show that Christ and the Father both work.

Again, Christ did not say, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father and the Holy Spirit." John 1:1-3 shows the relationship that God and Christ have: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made." Again, where is the mention of the Holy Spirit? Only TWO beings are referenced.

The Greek word Logos, translated "Word," also means "spokesman." Psalm 33 reveals the role Christ had in Creation: "By the word of theLORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth" (vs. 6).

In Matthew 19:17, Christ asked a young man who had questioned Him about salvation, "Why call you Me good? There is none good but One, that is, God." If Jesus knew He was also God (Luke 2:49), what did He mean here?

Two things become apparent:

(1) He was giving deference to the Father (see John 14:28). Christ had completely emptied Himself of the power of the Godhead, taking on the form of physical flesh as a servant (Phil. 2:7). Christ was made of flesh, and there is nothing good about flesh. See Romans 7:18-24, among numerous other verses.

(2) In anticipation of the reaction in the young man—that he would reject Christ's answer (vs. 22)—Christ was showing the paradox of the young man's question. Consider. He called Christ, "Good Master," and professed to want to do whatever Christ said, but his actions showed he did not believe he was talking to God—one who was "good." Christ recognized that the young man had the same "worshipful" attitude held by so many who rejected Him. (See Luke 6:46; 20:17; Matt. 7:21; 21:42; 13:57; Mark 12:10 and Acts 4:11.) Therefore, He was pointing the young man to what the Father requires.

Acts 5

In verses 3 and 4 of Acts 5, the apostle Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own power? Why have you conceived this

thing in your heart? You have not lied unto men, but unto God."

Does this passage prove that the Holy Spirit is a person? How could Peter state that Ananias and Sapphira were lying to the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit is merely the inanimate power or agent of God?

Let's understand how it was the power—not the person—of the Holy Spirit both in Peter's mind and their own minds that Ananias and Sapphira were lying to.

It was the Holy Spirit that gave Peter the ability to discern (Heb. 5:14) Ananias and Sapphira's lies. Notice I Corinthians 2:11: "What man knows the things of a man, except by the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man, except by the Spirit of God." Human beings learn by the spirit of man given to all human beings. This does not mean there is another person in each human person. Similarly, having God's Spirit in one does not mean there is another person in them.

While there is knowledge that human beings can learn and understand without having God's Holy Spirit, certain things can only be understood with His Spirit. Discerning spiritual things comes through God's Holy Spirit in the mind.

Christ demonstrated this ability of discernment in John 13:27: "And after the sop Satan entered into him [Judas]. Then said Jesus unto him, That you do, do quickly." Also notice Mark 8:33: "But when He [Christ] had turned about and looked on His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, Get you behind Me, Satan: for you savor not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." The Holy Spirit present in Christ's mind made this possible.

To understand how Peter could "see through" Ananias and Sapphira, consider the following analogy:

An attorney is discussing a technical legal matter with a potential client. Only a lawyer with the utmost legal understanding could properly handle the case. Also, only with complete and total knowledge of every aspect and detail of the situation can the lawyer hope to proceed. But the client, having dishonest ulterior motives, intentionally omits some minor details. Those details are so minute that they could potentially escape the attention of an attorney not deeply, intricately versed in the law. But the attorney sees the deception for what it is. How does he see through it? Because of the knowledge of the law that he possesses. Without that knowledge, he would not recognize the lie for what it is. His knowledge of the law leads him to understand the man's ulterior motives.

If one lies to a farmer about a matter dealing with aerospace engineering, the farmer probably will not recognize the lie. Likewise, if one lies to a rocket scientist about a matter concerning agriculture, the scientist will most likely not recognize it. Why? Because neither is versed in the particular subject being addressed.

It is the same with spiritual understanding: "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge" (I Cor. 8:7).

Remember, Romans 8:14 defines Christians: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." They must allow the "Spirit of truth" (the same as the Spirit of God) to guide them (John 16:13).

In Acts 5, Peter, guided by the Holy Spirit working in his mind, was able to discern three things about Ananias and Sapphira:

(1) They had conspired together on their way to see him.

(2) Their sin and their motive.

(3) The punishment they would receive.

After Pentecost in AD 31, God communicated to His servants through His Spirit (John 16:13).

Peter could say they were also lying to God because:

(1) Peter was the leading apostle in God's Church. Christ had told him and the other disciples, "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:18).

(2) Christ had also told His disciples, "And whatsoever you shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it" (John 14:13-14). Christ had given His disciples power to act on His behalf. God had to guide them in these matters.

(3) Conversely, He showed that anything done to or for Christians was considered to be done to or for Him. Notice: "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it unto Me" (Matt. 25:40).

Also notice the following Old Testament accounts:

(4) "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness…And in the morning, then you shall see the glory of the LORD; for that He hears your murmurings against theLORD: and what are we, that you murmur against us?…for that the LORD hears your murmurings which you murmur against Him: and what are we? Your murmurings are not against us, but against theLORD" (Ex. 16:2, 7-8).

(5) "And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto you: for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (I Sam. 8:7).

These passages show why Peter could say that Ananias and Sapphira were lying to both God and the Holy Spirit. It was not because the Holy Spirit is a separate person in the Godhead. They were lying to one of God's apostles, in whom He was working—through the power of His Holy Spirit.

Also, consider Peter's statement, "You have not lied unto men." Advocates of the trinity teaching ignore the fact that the husband and wife had lied directly to Peter (a man). Peter was a flesh-and-blood human being. Was he somehow elevating himself to the status of either God or the Holy Spirit? (See Acts 10:25-26 and 14:7-18.)

Trinitarians' argument has no strength because it is inconsistent and does not examine every aspect of the account. As is always the case, religionists have taken a single scripture out of context and either ignored or maligned other scriptures, building a doctrinal "house of cards." The wise are always able to see through it and knock it down.

Acts 13

This scripture presents another perfect example of how so many religionists ignore context, sometimes vital context, focusing on one aspect of a passage to make it say something it does not. What follows is supposed proof of the personhood of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 13:2-4: "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, departed unto Seleucia…"

Notice the seven elements of this scripture:

(1) "As they ministered to the Lord": These men were seeking God's will in a matter—specifically, the ordination of two men. James 4:8 states, "Draw near to God [not the Holy Spirit], and He will draw near to you."

(2) "when they had fasted": Fasting is a tool of Christian growth. It helps Christians acknowledge to God that they are nothing of and by themselves, and allows them to draw closer to Him. Fasting also blocks Satan's influence. If you are drawing near to God, you are resisting Satan. And, as James 4:7 states, if you "Resist the devil…he will flee from you." By fasting, these men demonstrated to God they wanted His total involvement in a purpose.

Also, a fast involves going without food and drink for a period of time, usually at least 24 hours. Read Jeremiah 36:6; Isaiah 58:3; Nehemiah 9:1. So the period covered between Acts 13:2 and verse 3 is at least 24 hours. (You may read our helpful article "What You Need to Know About Fasting" to learn more about how to fast.)

(3) "…the Holy Spirit said": If this were a literal voice from God, why would the men have felt the need to continue fasting and praying? They would have had their answer! None would suggest God was speaking the same message to them nonstop for 24 hours. (Notice II Samuel 12:16-23; Daniel 10:3-13 and Matthew 9:14-15.) They were being guided by God's Spirit within them, and they needed to be crystal clear about the intent of the message it was bringing. An actual voice would eliminate any such need. Again, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

(4) "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them": It is the Father who does the calling (John 6:44, 65). The Holy Spirit is the means by which the Father draws them. Also, it is Christ who determines who will be used in the ministry—and in what office (I Cor. 12:28). Finally, if this were the voice of a God Being, spoken audibly for all to hear, it would have been accompanied by obvious displays of natural forces. (Notice John 5:37 and also Acts 9:3-7.)

(5) "…and prayed": Prayer is another tool of Christian growth, used to make our needs known to God. It is also the way we ask God to make His will known to us. (See Matthew 6:10 and 26:39, 42.) Again, if they had already received an audible answer, why would they have continued praying?

(6) "…and laid their hands on them": The laying on of hands is a symbolic act when God is called upon, in faith, to bless and sanctify or impart authority and power. The power of the Holy Spirit is involved in four purposes—blessings, baptism, healing and ordination.

Genesis 48:13-20 records that Ephraim and Manasseh received a special blessing when Israel (Jacob) laid hands upon them. The blessing of little children is also performed by the laying on of hands, as instructed by Christ (Mark 10:15-16; Matt. 19:13-15 and Luke 18:15-17).

In the baptism ceremony, the repentant person receives the gift of the Holy Spirit by having hands laid on him. This is first recorded in Acts 8:17-18: "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit…through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given." Also see Acts 19:5-6 and II Timothy 1:6.

God's healing is also the result of an elder's prayer with faith, accompanied by the laying on of hands on the head of the afflicted person. Notice Acts 9:17: "…and Ananias [not the Ananias of Acts 5]…entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus…has sent me, that you might receive your sight."

Ordination into an office in God's Church is also done through the laying on of hands. The first example is found in Acts 6:6-8, involving the ordination of deacons: "…and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them…And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." God's Church today faithfully observes this practice in all ordinations. Hebrews 6:2 specifically lists it as one of God's doctrines.

(7) "…they sent them away": These men were acting on God's behalf, ordaining men into

higher ministerial offices. This part of the verse reveals two things: (1) In addition to prayer and fasting, they had also counseled together to reach a wise decision (notice Proverbs 11:14 and 15:22); (2) the Holy Spirit did not, of itself, send these men. Again, the verse states, "…they [Niger, Lucius, Manaen] sent them away."

To summarize: God, through the power of His Spirit, acting in response to those seeking His guidance, inspired the men involved to understand that He wanted Barnabas and Saul to depart.

Numbers 6:24-26—Old Testament Trinity Proof?

You are seeing that "proofs" of the trinity are hollow—that they are built on quicksand created by scholars who explain Scripture with no greater tool than human reasoning.

Consider the following explanation from Unger's Bible Dictionary (UBD): "Although the doctrine of the Trinity is implicit rather than explicit in the Old Testament, at the same time, it is properly held that with the accompanying light of the New Testament this truth can be found in the Old (e.g., Num. 6:24-26; Isa. 6:3; 63:9, 10, the sanctity of the symbolical number three)" (p. 1118).

Besides the fact that the New Testament does not offer anything that brings the trinity to light in the Old Testament, a second problem in this argument is the misuse of symbolism associated with the supposed "sanctity" of the number three. Throughout Scripture we see a pattern of three used to denote completion of time and events—but never in reference to God.

Consider. God uses three annual Holy Day seasons to depict His Plan of salvation (Deut. 16:16), and it includes three resurrections (I Thes. 4:16 and Rev. 20:5-15). Jonah was in the belly of a great fish three days and three nights (Jonah 1:17). Jesus pointed to Jonah as the only sign He was the Messiah in that He would be three days and three nights in the grave (Matt. 12:39-40). These are all time-related events!

The supposed "proof" found in Numbers 6 becomes another example of trinitarian illogic: "The LORD bless you, and keep you: The LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace" (Num. 6:24-26). Merely because it says three things the Lord does, trinitarians claim this verse proves ancient Israel served a triune god. Do you see any part of this passage that espouses a three-in-one godhead? Of course not! And "the LORD," not Father or Holy Spirit, is mentioned in all three places.

It should be a source of embarrassment for trinitarian theologians to use such silly nonsense to hold what they call a mystery. Why not just let it stand as a mystery without pretending it is biblical?

Then this: How can theologians attest that ancient Israel believed in the trinity when they later rejected Christ, accusing Him of blasphemy when He claimed to be God's Son? And as Acts 19:2 shows, some had not even "so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit." If ancient Israel had recognized the existence of the Holy Spirit as a third member of a supposed triune godhead, how could these Jews have no knowledge of it whatsoever?

Under thorough examination, such "proofs" disintegrate.

If a belief in a trinity had been at the core of Israel's worship of God, and if Numbers 6:24-26 is a blueprint for it, why is this not explicit? If the passage constitutes a supposed trinitarian "deific formula," why would God hide its meaning in a coded message? Why not just say straight out that there are three members of the godhead? The answer? Because there are not!

God's Name

The second problem with the argument, referenced above, is the claim that three separate members of the Godhead are each bestowing a blessing on Israel. But Deuteronomy 6:4 makes plain that "The LORD our God is oneLORD." Here, and in Numbers 6, the Hebrew word translated "LORD" (KJV) is YHVH, meaning the "self-Existent or Eternal," not the "Eternal three-in-one."

YHVH is first found in Genesis 2:7, where we find the record of the LORD God (YHVH) forming man "of the dust of the ground." It was the LORD God who was in the Garden of Eden, the same One with whom Adam and Eve directly communicated. This was the same Being referred to as "the Word" in John 1:1.

This can be proven by examining and understanding the Hebrew root words from which YHVH is derived: HYH means "was," HVH means "is" (actually, the present tense because the Hebrew language does not incorporate the verb "is") and YHYH means "will continue to be."

Do not be confused. By simply assembling the parts, the definition of YHVH becomes clear. It means literally "Was-Is-Will Continue to Be." Hebrew scholars agree that YHVH is a derivation of the infinitive verb "to be." In Exodus 3, the One speaking to Moses identifies Himself as "I AM" (vs. 6), and "I AM THAT I AM" (vs. 14). We will see that this was the same Being who later became Christ!

Through His very name, God demonstrates that His existence and presence is not limited by time constraints. He has always existed and always will. Malachi 3:6 further shows this: "For I am the Lord [YHVH], I change not…" It is also expounded by the phrase, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8); and by the declarative statement, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8).

Trinity Not Acknowledged by the Apostle Paul

Bible scholars and religionists routinely twist and pervert the apostle Paul's writings in order to make him "agree" with their own doctrinal positions.

Something is noticeably absent from all of the greetings at the outset of Paul's 14 epistles. While he references the Father and Jesus Christ in every greeting, he continually overlooks a greeting from the Holy Spirit to the congregation addressed (Hebrews contains no greeting from either Father, Son or Holy Spirit). If the Holy Spirit is indeed a third, full-fledged member of the Godhead, why did Paul consistently omit a greeting from "him"—and thus insult "him"? If they were honest, proponents of trinitarian thought would have to accuse Paul of heresy—if not outright blasphemy—for this omission.

Notice the following eleven introductions:

Romans 1:1, 7-9: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God...Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all…"

I Corinthians 1:1, 3: "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God… Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

II Corinthians 1:1-3: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God...Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ…"

Galatians 1:1, 3: "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead)...Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 1:1-3: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus…Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Philippians 1:1-2: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Phillipi…Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Colossians 1:1-3: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God…Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ..."

I Thessalonians 1:1: "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians… Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

II Thessalonians 1:1-2: "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians… Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Philemon 1:1, 3: "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer…Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Titus 1:1, 4: "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…To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour."

Also, neither of Paul's letters to Timothy included a greeting from the Holy Spirit. Again, if the Holy Spirit is a member of the Godhead, why does Paul so consistently omit greetings from "him"? Come to grips with what is not being said.

Further Scriptural Proof

Now that we have debunked some of the trinity "proof texts," we can now look at scriptures that prove plainly that God is NOT a trinity. Because these are simple and clear scriptures, a thorough explanation for each passage will not be necessary. When natural opportunities are presented, and the Father is being discussed, the Holy Spirit is overlooked or omitted time and again.

Matthew 27:46: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Why would Jesus say this? As a third of the trinity, He could not forsake Himself. Is He suggesting that the Father forsook Him, but the Holy Spirit did not? Of course not.

Luke 10:22: "All things are delivered to Me of My Father: and no man knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." When Christ came, He revealed the Father. Ancient Israel never knew the Father. Were it a person, why did not Christ also reveal and declare the Holy Spirit?

John 17:3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus

Christ, whom You have sent." If the "only true God" is the trinity, which would include Jesus Christ, why then would Christ have to be mentioned and why was the Holy Spirit not mentioned?

John 17:11: "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are." Again, no mention of the Holy Spirit! Examine verses 20-22 of the same chapter. Verse 11 explains that God and Christ are one just as God's people are one through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes into play as the power that allows God's people to be one unified group—the Church of God. But consider: All individual human beings in the true Church are not one single being—the Father and Christ are one as the brethren are one and vice-versa. God's people are all separate beings! God and Christ are separate Beings.

Why can people not connect I Corinthians 1:10, which we have already examined, and recognize, for instance, that Paul was not telling the brethren in Corinth to be one single person, simply because he wanted them to be of "one mind," in the "same judgment" and with "no divisions" among them?

John 20:17: "Jesus said unto her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." This passage reveals that our relationship to the Father is the same as the relationship that Jesus Christ had. This could not be the case if Christ was a third of the godhead.

John 1:18: "No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." If Christ has seen the Father, what about the Holy Spirit? As part of the godhead, why would the Holy Spirit not also see the Father, and participate in revealing Him?

I Corinthians 8:6: "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." Carefully note what is said. There is one God the Father and one Jesus Christ—but there is no mention of the Holy Spirit. Again, why?

I Corinthians 11:3: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." How could the Father be the Head of Christ if they are a trinity in one being? And then the same question arises: Where is the Holy Spirit in this equation?

These are but a sampling of the easy-to-understand passages that disprove the trinity. God's Word is clear and simple for those willing to just read it honestly!

Speaking of the "last days," just before the Return of Christ, Paul described how people would not seek the truth. Let's read a warning to God's people, even those of the true Church: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4).

The trinity is among the most popular fables of all time. Ask whether you will endure the sound doctrine refuting it.

What we have examined so far is only the beginning of what the Bible teaches about the nature of God. It declares that there is only one God. The question remains: If not the trinity, Who and What then is the true God?

Is God One?

Other questions must be addressed before thoroughly examining the true God and His Holy Spirit. Many conclude that if one does not adhere to the trinity, he automatically believes in a teaching called modalism. Is this true? What is modalism? Also, many will adamantly claim that the teaching within this book is a form of polytheism and goes against the biblical teaching of a monotheistic God. Again, is this true? Is there more than one Being within the Godhead? These questions have confused philosophers and theologians for centuries. Yet this should never have been the case.

Modalism

Before looking into the issues of monotheism vs. polytheism, one specific concept must be addressed—the position of modalism.

Modalism was originally called Sabellianism, after its founder. The beginning of this school of thought goes back decades before the Council of Nicaea. At the time of the Council, the advocates of the trinity were at odds with the supporters of Arian. Sabellianism was associated with Aryanism and was one of the minority factions represented at Nicaea. As discussed earlier, 300 of the 318-plus delegates at Nicaea were intimidated into voting in favor of the trinity. Anyone not supporting the accepted “orthodox” belief was either exiled or declared a heretic, which could result in death. Modalism and Aryanism eventually disappeared as viable alternatives, since both beliefs were officially viewed as heresy.

Certain theologians have been stuck in the error of Jewish theology, not allowing them to properly understand how God is one. This created a problem. Unwilling to accept classic trinitarianism as compatible with monotheism, these had to come up with an alternative theory that would be compatible. Modalism was their creation.

According to the teaching of modalism, there can be separate modes of a single being. This means that there is only one personage in the Godhead, but this personage can manifest himself as the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit. In theory, this one being can only be perceived in one mode at a time. (In effect, this idea makes God into a kind of divine schizophrenic.) This approach is an acceptance of a modified version of the trinity and is at best a theoretical abstraction much like the trinity itself. All previous passages that we have explored show that modalism is simply not based on the Bible! This theory only mentions the perceived mode of the three beings that God is supposedly representing Himself to be at any one time, without relating to the actual substance or composition of God. This position is advocated by most Pentecostals and Unitarians today.

Trinitarians try to identify everyone who rejects their philosophy as advocates of some form of modalism. However, it is possible for one to legitimately reject both the trinity and modalism as being equally unscriptural and unfounded. While it is not our purpose to address all the issues of the theory or teaching of modalism, it does set up the question of whether God is one.

Monotheism

Monotheism has long been considered by anthropologists and archaeologists as the mark of an advanced culture. This is based on the assumption that ancient man worshipped numerous gods and slowly evolved into monotheism. The few cultures that adhered to it were considered to be more developed.

However, recent research of ancient history confirms what is recorded in Scripture—that monotheism actually preceded polytheism, the worship of many gods. We know that the patriarch Noah was a worshipper of the true God. Only later, after the time of Nimrod, did polytheism begin to flourish. We find in Genesis 31 that Laban (Jacob's uncle) possessed idols. In Genesis 35, Jacob ordered his family and servants to put away their idols.

Scriptures Reveal Duality

To grasp the big picture, we must consider many Scriptures about God. We discovered that neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament endorses the trinity, as millions assume. Certain passages will be repeated, now asking the question, "Is God One Being?"

First, in John 10:30, recall that Christ stated, "I and My Father are One." Trinitarians insist this confirms that the Father and Son (with the Holy Spirit) constitute a common person or hypostasis. But how does Christ explain that He and the Father are one?

The answer is found in John 17:22: "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them; that they [His followers] may be one, even as We are one." Christ is here seen to be one with God in the same way that the disciples (and the Church of God through the ages) were one—were UNIFIED! A few verses earlier in John 17:11, we found a similar phrase about those God calls, "…That they may be one as We are."

Consider again. Are these brethren welded together into one person? Obviously not! They are bonded in the same mindset, under the same inspiration of God's Spirit. They are "one" in the same way as the Father and Christ are. Confusion and mystery enter when definitions come from philosophy—human reasoning—rather than Scripture.

Two Separate Beings

In Genesis 1:26, we saw a conversation between two Beings—two members of the God Family. Next notice this from Genesis 3:22, where these two members of the God Family are conversing again: "…Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil…" Also notice Genesis 11:6-7: "And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let Us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." Think. God is not schizophrenic. He is not talking to Himself.

We see the Logos (the Word - John 1:1) and the Father—two separate God Beings—conversing throughout the Bible. However, the existence of the Father was not revealed to Israel, or mankind in general, until Jesus revealed Him during His ministry. Even then, this

revelation only applied to those called of God (see Luke 10:22 "…and he to whom the Son will reveal Him"). We will discuss this in greater detail at the end of this chapter.

Also note Psalm 110:1: "TheLORD said unto my Lord, Sit You at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool." This describes a greater Being (the Father—"The LORD") speaking to King David's Lord (the God of the Old Testament—"my Lord"). In almost every case in the Old Testament, "LORD" referred to Christ, who was the God of the Old Testament (I Cor. 10:1-4). But it speaks here of one of greater supremacy.

Further notice Daniel 7:13: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him." Here, the "Son of Man" (Christ) approached the "Ancient of Days" (the Father). Christ was not approaching Himself. He is being "coronated" and given dominion and power over the nations of Earth. This prophecy will be fulfilled in the near future.

Trinitarians often present conditions, constraints and theoretical parameters established by philosophy. Esoteric arguments assert that a dual Godhead limits God because one deity must yield His space and power to another, thus resulting in both supposedly becoming finite—while one being can be infinite in space and power, the argument concludes. This theory then says that God cannot be limited or confined to any space, no matter its size—meaning His boundaries must be the universe and beyond—wherever space exists. Otherwise, the thought is that He would need "shape" and "composition"—and thus be made of something—supposedly impossible for spirit.

According to this thinking, there cannot be more than one infinite being! Two or more means they pass through each other—something that is also deemed to be impossible. In reality, this is pure Greek philosophy, set to theology. Somewhere here the simplicity in Christ disappeared. Again, if you are confused, that is good.

Rather than from Scripture, these ideas derive solely from human reasoning—from philosophers trying to understand the spirit world when it has not been revealed to them.

The truth is that God is not constrained by, or subject to, such human reasoning.

(For those who cleave to the idea that God is a kind of amorphous blob permeating all space in and out of the universe, Chapter Nine PROVES beyond a shadow of a doubt from Scripture that God is not without explicit shape and form.)

Equality Within the Godhead?

Trinitarians cite Philippians 2:5-6 to prove Jesus' equality with the Father. This verse states, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Yet we find elsewhere that Christ said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).

How are these two verses reconciled? If the Father is greater than Christ, how can they be equal?

Consider this analogy. A child has equal rights under the law that adults do. On the human level, the child is equal, but in ability and experience is not comparable to an adult. Thus, Philippians 2:5-6 shows that Christ was on the same level as the Father (both are God) in the sense of existing as a God Being, but certainly not equal to the All-Supreme Father whom Jesus acknowledged as greater: "My Father…is greater than all…" (John 10:29)—of course, then, including Himself.

Scripture does not show the Father and Christ as equal. What about the Holy Spirit? What does the Bible teach?

More scriptures reveal a giant problem with the Holy Spirit being equal in the Godhead. First, consider John 13:16: "Truly, truly, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither He that is sent greater than He that sent Him." Christ is not greater than His Father. The Psalmist wrote, "You send forth Your spirit, they are created: and You renew the face of the earth" (104:30). Christ, by the instruction of the Father, sent the Holy Spirit to renew the Earth. Combining this with John 13:16, it is clear that the Holy Spirit is not equal to God! The next chapter will cover this in greater detail.

Why Judaism Maintained Monotheism

"Orthodox" Christianity rejected nearly every aspect of Judaism except the premise concerning monotheism. It served the purpose of established Christianity to adopt monotheism, since the concept of one God molded perfectly into their theory of the trinity. Why did Judaism and Trinitarianism adopt monotheism?

Advocates of the trinity turn to Deuteronomy 6:4, generally referred to as the "Shama," referenced earlier. They insist that this verse refers to God's nature, claiming that it is emphatic about God being one personage or being. Traditionally and historically, this verse has been the definitive statement of the Hebrew concept of monotheism. Therefore, we must examine it in detail for what it does and does not say.

This crucial verse reads, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD." A casual reading of this passage appears to emphasize that the Godhead consists of only one Being. But is this really what it says?

The Hebrew terms from which this verse is translated are written below with the English translation included. This will be helpful as we carefully examine each word:

Shama, yisrial Yahweh Elohim Yahweh echad.

Hear, O Israel [The] LORD God [is] LORD alone.

We will briefly discuss two of these Hebrew terms and how they are translated elsewhere in the Bible. The reader will be surprised at what this phrase really means and how it does actually refer to the trinity—but not in a way that any trinitarian would expect or want to accept.

"Shama"

Shama means "to hearken; pay attention in order to be instructed; to listen up with a ready mind." One example of Shama is found in Deuteronomy 4:1: "Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you…" Another example is Genesis 27:8: "Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command you." In this second case, Shama is translated "obey." One final example is found in Deuteronomy 5:1: "And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day…" In this verse, Shama is translated as "hear."

The Hebrew word in the phrase that is most subject to controversy is echad. This word is not always translated to represent the concept of "oneness." Notice how it is translated in Genesis 1:5: "…and the evening and the morning were the first day." Here, echad is translated as "first." Genesis 2:24 is an example of where echad is translated to mean "one": "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Take note. The man and woman are two separate individuals, even though they are bound by the marriage covenant, and the "one flesh" is referring to the sex act within marriage. Though they are at times "one flesh," they do not constitute the same person or hypostasis. Hence, in

Deuteronomy 6:4, the use of "one" for echad would similarly imply that the Godhead consisted of distinct Beings—not constituting the same person or hypostasis.

"Echad"

In Genesis 34:22, echad is translated "one people," consisting of numerous distinct individuals. Finally, in Isaiah 51:2, echad is translated: "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." Here, echad was translated as "alone." The context in this verse was that of uniqueness.

But in order to further understand Deuteronomy 6:4, we must examine the verse's context. In Deuteronomy 5, the restatement of the Ten Commandments is the sole context. Verse 29 states, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" Verse 33 continues, "You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess."

The context of chapter 5, which sets up the Shama, is the all-important issue of obedience to God, through the Ten Commandments, listed there again by Moses. Now, in chapter 6, we should closely examine the three preceding verses and the three following verses. First, Deuteronomy 6:1-3: "Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you go to possess it: that you might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command you, you, and your son, and your son's son, all the days of your life; and that your days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with you, and that you may increase mightily, as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you, in the land that flows with milk and honey."

Next, we examine Deuteronomy 6:5-7, the verses following the Shama: "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words, which I command you this day, shall be in your heart: and you shall teach them diligently unto your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up."

All-important Context

Understand that the context of Deuteronomy 6:4 was not the nature of God. Rather, just as in chapter 5, the focus of chapter 6 was obedience to God by living, submitting to, loving and cleaving to Him, and teaching one's children the Ten Commandments.

Given the true meaning of the Hebrew words in Deuteronomy 6:4 and the overall context in which it is found, it is now possible to understand its real intent. This passage should read as follows:

"HEAR AND OBEY, O ISRAEL, THE ETERNAL GOD AND
[HIM] ALONE."

The meaning as seen here is very different from what most have supposed—or been willing to carefully examine.

The overall intent of the passage is that God did not want His people, Israel, to listen to other gods. He wanted them solely focused on hearing and obeying HIM! Recall from earlier in the book that Israel went on to have a long, checkered history of involvement with, and worship of,

other gods. They continually deviated from the first four commandments and rollercoastered in and out of idolatry and worship of the gods of surrounding nations in place of the true God.

Let's state plainly for emphasis one more time the purpose of the Shama: The true God of the Bible wanted His followers to hear Him and Him alone, and to obey Him and Him alone. As "a jealous God," He did not want them listening to or obeying the customs and traditions of other gods under any circumstances.

Final Irony

Something else emerges, and it has a direct bearing on the trinity and the thinking of trinitarians.

In the First Commandment—"You shall have no other gods before Me"—God plainly commands rejection of the trinity in the strongest possible way! Recall the Shama, explained earlier—"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD [recall this means "hear the LORD God only"]."

How ironic that trinitarian scholars and theologians turn to a passage that condemns adherence to their god as support for it by twisting the meaning. Such is the confusion of minds unwilling to "hear" the God of the Bible. Like ancient Israel, many refuse to listen to and obey the true God, having rejected Him in favor of an unexplained "mystery." Fulfilling Hosea 4:6, they have rejected vital spiritual knowledge they could have known!

Isaiah 44:6 is also used to prove that God is one Being. Notice: "…beside Me there is no God." The Hebrew word translated "God" is elohim, a plural term—a collective noun like kingdom, family or church. Again, this means one God Family—not one Being!

Father Not Yet Revealed

There is another reason that the followers of Judaism hold to monotheism. They had never heard about the Father. It was always Christ Who interacted with the patriarchs, prophets and Israel.

The Bible says that no man had any knowledge of the Father before Christ's ministry. John 5:37 showed, "And the Father Himself, which has sent Me, has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape." John 1:18 states, "No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son...He has declared Him." Next, Luke 10:22 states, "All things are delivered to Me of My Father: and no man knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him."

Two Beings are identified in the prologue of John's gospel (1:1-2), just as is the case in the conversation between these two God Beings in Genesis 1:26: "Let Us make man in Our image…" Again, the term "God" derives from the Hebrew word elohim.

The Father was the All-Supreme Being and the other Person, the Word—the God of the Old Testament (I Cor. 10:1-4)—was the Spokesman who created all things (John 1:3; Col. 1:13-17) and later appeared in the flesh as Jesus Christ (John 1:14). It is possible, however, that some of the patriarchs such as Abraham or Moses knew of the Father as distinct from the LORD or Eternal who dealt with Israel and thundered the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. We have seen that King David knew of this duality (Psa. 110:1), as well as did the prophet Daniel (Dan. 7:13).

The picture of the God Family was not clear until Jesus revealed the Father.

The Bible's plain teaching is that there is ONE God, comprised of two Beings. As a human family is comprised of three, four, five or more people, God is a Family now consisting of two.

This truth has been lost for millennia to those who have been taught to believe that it is blasphemy to suggest that there could be more than one God Being.

The Jews at the time of Christ thought it was blasphemy for Him to assert His divinity and that He had been with God. Tragically, most professing Christians today claim that it is equally blasphemous to accept the ultimate destiny for which human beings are born—what will be seen to be the true salvation revealed in the Bible. You will see God's Family will expand dramatically in the near future.

But first we must understand more clearly what is the Holy Spirit.

Defining the Holy Spirit

We now come to a central question: Who or what is the Holy Spirit? Many people answer this in the following way: "He is the third person of the Trinity." However, close examination of Scripture reveals a totally different picture.

Satan counterfeits every aspect of true Christianity. The truth about who and what the Holy Spirit is would be no exception. It serves the devil's purpose to deceive people into believing that the Holy Spirit is a person. He knows that if he can convince people to believe this, they will never learn their own awesome potential. Satan knows that human beings will ultimately be offered an opportunity that he will never receive.

Is the Holy Spirit a Person?

We saw that the supposed three members—"persons"—within the trinity are actually one being. But is the Holy Spirit a separate person? As in previous chapters, earlier points will be repeated in a different context. To explain the full truth of the matter, we must examine many scriptures.

Simply put, a person is a person. Three persons cannot be more or less than three persons. Each is separate and unique. If the Holy Spirit is a person, it cannot be part of a triune godhead of one being. Some will say that it is not accurate to label God as a person, however, most trinitarians do. Of course, they then wander off into abstract, philosophical ideas. Again, many ignore II Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

To understand the fallacy of the argument that the Holy Spirit is a person, we start by examining I Kings 3:16-27. In this well-known account, there was a dispute over who was the rightful mother of a baby. Solomon offered the following solution: Cut the baby in two and give each woman half. Obviously, a person cannot be cut in half and live. Likewise, individual human body parts do not regenerate, and will eventually corrupt, if they are cut off.

Here is the point. We have already explained how the trinity concept does not permit Christ to "extricate" Himself to come to Earth as Savior. Neither can the Holy Spirit be locked into the Father and Son in the same way. If it is a person, it is separate.

God expects Christians to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18). If the Holy Spirit is a person, how would it be increased within the Christian who has it? For a person to increase the amount of God's Spirit within him, he has to exercise it. How could this be done if the Spirit were a person? It is either present or it is not, with no way to be increased or decreased. Take a moment and read the parable of the pounds found in Luke 19:11-26. In this parable, Christ is instructing His listeners to increase the amount of the Holy

Spirit within them. (To learn more about how the Spirit of God grows in a person, read our vital article "Exercise God's Spirit!")

In Psalm 51:11, confessing his sin, King David implored God, "Take not Your Holy Spirit from me." If the Holy Spirit were a distinct person, with a mind and consciousness of its own, would David have not said, "Holy Spirit, do not leave me"? Would the Holy Spirit not have the power to come and go as "He" pleases? Luke 11:13 makes plain that the Holy Spirit is given by God to those who ask for it. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is not a person that comes of its own volition, but rather is seen to be something that God gives.

In this regard, notice that in Acts 8:18-20, Peter did not rebuke Simon Magus for referring to the Holy Spirit as power, as opposed to a person, when this man sought this "power" for himself. He rebuked Simon because he thought he could "purchase" such a power with money.

Christ Revealed the Father, Not the Holy Spirit

We now ask: How did Christ reveal the Father to a world that knew nothing of Him?

Again, Israel had been worshipping the Word—Jesus Christ before He became flesh—and they were led out of Egypt by Him, not the Father. Referenced earlier, now notice: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea [the Red Sea, upon leaving Egypt]; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (I Cor. 10:1-4).

Let's do basic thinking. Jesus revealed what the Father is like, and did this through the power of the Holy Spirit. Consider. If the Holy Spirit were a person, would not Christ have also revealed "Him"? Now ask: How could He reveal the Holy Spirit through the Holy Spirit? This makes no sense and Scripture makes no mention of this.

The Holy Spirit was dwelling in Jesus. Therefore, it would make no sense for Christ to utter any of the following statements, if the Holy Spirit were a person doing the works in Him. Notice more stark omission of any reference to the Holy Spirit or its "work" in the following passages:

- "If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also: and from now on you know Him, and have seen Him" (John 14:7).
- "Jesus said unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? He that has seen Me has seen the Father; and how say you then, show us the Father?" (John 14:9).
- "Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me, He does the works" (John 14:10).

In all of these passages, Christ speaks of the Father and Him doing the works. If the Spirit were a person, would not that have been a good time to announce this? Think of the insult to the Holy Spirit in Christ's blatant ignoring of all that this "person" was supposedly doing in Him.

Trinitarians should carefully study the many scriptures that omit even mild obligatory reference to the Holy Spirit's personhood when this would be so necessary.

Holy Spirit Is Not the Father

Trinitarians have a difficult time logically explaining the following verses about the place of the

Father in Christ's life and the very different role of the Holy Spirit as the agent or begetting power of the Father. A question naturally arises: Who is Christ's Father?

- "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, you son of David, fear not to take unto you Mary your wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy [Spirit]" (Matt. 1:20). (Also read Luke 1:35 for more detail.)
- "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

How many ever consider these verses? They seem to be contradicting one another. Was Christ begotten by the Father or by the Holy Spirit? If Christ was "conceived" by the Holy Spirit as a person, then "he"—the Holy Spirit—would be Christ's father. And if the Holy Spirit were a person, then "he" would be our father also.

Let's permit basic logic to prevail. A human father is called a father because he is the one who IS the father! No one is confused about this, just as they are not confused about whether a human baby has two fathers. In this regard, a baby does not have a "human" father and a "sperm" father, because the sperm did the begetting. The sperm came from the human father, who is the one who did the begetting. The same is true of the Spirit Father of the newly begotten true Christian who merely received the Father's "seed" in the form of the Holy Spirit sent for the purpose of performing the begettal.

Also notice Peter's statement that Christians are begotten by the Father: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Pet. 1:3). The only difference is that unlike Christ, one is spiritually begotten after his physical birth, not before.

Peter says "begotten us again" because these were begotten the first time by their physical father and born physically. Then, at conversion, Christians are begotten a second time by their spiritual Father, later to be BORN AGAIN.

When pieced together, these verses make clear that the Father begat Christ through the power of His Holy Spirit. Keep it simple—do not allow theologians, impressed with their own theories, to impress you with illogical, nonsensical arguments that only prove that they do not know what they are talking about.

Read the second half of Romans 16:18 as a powerful warning to all!

Holy Spirit is Not a Proper Name

In the Old Testament, the word "holy" is translated from the Hebrew word qodesh, meaning "a sacred place or thing." "Spirit" is translated from the Hebrew word ruach, meaning "wind, breath, or life." In the New Testament, "holy" is translated from the Greek word hagios, meaning "sacred." "Spirit" is translated from the Greek word pneuma, meaning "current of air, breath, or breeze."

Notice how these are not names like people or the Father and Christ have. In this case, the words Holy and Spirit merely describe what the thing is—HOLY (because it is God's) and SPIRIT (because it is like wind).

Unlike the Father and Christ, who are both composed of spirit, and have names and are clearly portrayed as having form and shape, nowhere in Scripture is the Holy Spirit given a name or mentioned as having form. Read Matthew 3:16 and John 14:16, and then think

logically: Is the Holy Spirit really a "dove," and is "comforter" an actual name?—or are these words used to convey meaning?

Angels and demons are spirit beings, and they have names, can talk and have forms. Notice:

- "And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto you, and to show you these glad tidings" (Luke 1:19).
- "And the LORD said unto Satan, From where come you? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (Job 1:7).

Where in Scripture is the Holy Spirit shown to be doing such things? Where is "He" shown to be interacting with other beings like the examples above? The answer is NOWHERE! And if it were a person, why would it not have an actual name as does every other spirit being—including Satan—described in Scripture?

Stop and ponder what you have read so far before continuing.

Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost?

Because the terms "Holy Spirit" and "Holy Ghost" are both found in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, some conclude that two different spirits are being discussed. However, "ghost" is an archaic translation of the original Greek word pneuma, from which both terms are translated.

When referring to God's Spirit, pneuma (which literally means "breath") is properly translated "Spirit," as is the case in Luke 11:13, Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30, and many other verses.

At the time of the first printing of the KJV (1611; over 1,400 years after the New Testament was first written in Greek), the English words "spirit" and "ghost" had the same meaning. This made it natural for the translators to render the one Greek word as both English words. Though their inconsistency was not intentional, it resulted in the misunderstanding that the "Holy Ghost" and "Holy Spirit" are two separate spirits.

To clarify the matter, the term "Holy Spirit" could be used in all instances in which the Spirit of God or Spirit of Christ is referenced. A good example is Romans 8:9, which mentions both the "Spirit of God" and "Spirit of Christ."

As Ephesians 4:6 shows, when a person receives the Holy Spirit, it is one Spirit: "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Also notice John 10:30, 14:8-9 and Amos 3:3.

This problem is corrected in the New King James Version, in which the Greek expression hagios pneuma is consistently translated "Holy Spirit."

Why Is the Holy Spirit Referred to as "He"?

A universally favored piece of "evidence" used to "prove" the Holy Spirit's personage is the masculine pronoun "He," found in certain verses in John's gospel account. However, when examined, this evidence is strictly circumstantial. The irony of this claim is that the scholars teaching it are supposedly versed in the Greek language of the New Testament. Unlike English, Greek nouns are always assigned gender. They are either masculine, feminine or neuter. This

is completely arbitrary, having nothing whatsoever to do with any actual defining quality of the person, place or thing being referred to, unless a specific human being is being referenced. And pronouns must agree in gender with the nouns for which they are substituted.

To back up their claims, trinitarians quote John's gospel. The words "He" and "Himself" are used extensively in reference to the Holy Spirit. However, the inspired Greek words can also be translated "it" or "itself."

Case in point: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (John 16:7).

Compare this verse with Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." The exact same Greek word autos is translated two entirely different ways in these two verses ("him" and "itself"). When studying difficult biblical subjects, a careful study of the original language is necessary to avoid drawing wrong conclusions.

In John 16:8 and verse 13, the phrases "he will show" and "he will reprove" are actually translated from the Greek words elegcho and anaggello respectively. They mean: "to confute or admonish" and "to announce." The word "he" was used by translators for gender agreement, not because John was trying to establish the trinity.

Many will also cite the word "Comforter" as referring to a person. This is ridiculous. A comforter on your bed is obviously not a person. It is called such because of what it does. The same is true of the Holy Spirit.

Notice other examples of gender being assigned to non-gender items:

- "And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shines in his [the sun's] strength" (Rev. 1:16).

The possessive pronoun "his," referring to the sun, is strictly a grammatical tool. Such use of gender-specific pronouns in reference to inanimate objects is found in other languages as well, such as French and Spanish. In these languages, the gender of a possessive pronoun agrees with its object, not its subject. In the case of Revelation 1:16, obviously, neither "sun" nor "strength" has any inherent gender. Consider two more scriptures:

- "Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her [the earth's] place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger" (Isa. 13:13). Is the earth female?
- "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her [the moon's] light" (Matt. 24:29). Is the moon female?

When examined from the perspective of overall biblical usage, the way pronouns are translated is irrelevant. The real issue is the inconsistency found in theological arguments. Do trinitarians attribute literal gender and consciousness to the sun, moon or earth? Of course not! So why assign gender to the Holy Spirit?

One does not have to be a grammarian, historian or scholar to understand the Bible. In fact, the Bible shows that those who study it for the simplicity it contains (I Cor. 1:27; II Cor. 11:3; John 4:23), without adding their own "theological" conjecture, are the ones God is calling and working with (John 6:44, 65).

Is Man's Spirit a Person?

The book of Job makes a fundamental statement about another spirit that we have only briefly touched upon. Notice: "But there is a SPIRIT IN MAN: and the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding" (32:8).

Then notice this passage, also referenced earlier: "For what man knows the things of a man, save [by] the spirit of man which is in him? (I Cor. 2:11).

These two passages plainly reveal that there is a SPIRIT within all people. This is what differentiates human beings from animals, and is what gives people a concept of self. However, it is not this spirit that permits human beings to comprehend the truths of God. Notice the rest of verse 11 above: "…even so the things of God knows no man, but [by] the Spirit of God."

With the human spirit present, people can understand physical knowledge, and this is done through use of the five senses. But without the Spirit of God leading a person, it is ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE to understand God's truth—including the nature of the true God who is the One Who must give that Spirit to reveal Himself.

Now think: God has a Spirit, and man has a spirit. According to trinitarians, the Holy Spirit is a person. Using their convoluted logic, one could conclude that man's spirit is a person, which means that there would be another "person" dwelling within each person. Obviously, this is ridiculous!

Can the Holy Spirit Feel Grief?

Paul recorded, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).

What does it mean to "grieve the Holy Spirit"? Does this passage mean that the Holy Spirit can "feel" pain or grief? Also, can something be grieved if it is not a person? Trinitarian reasoning argues "no."

But consider, for example, the expression, "Don't stress the system." What does this mean? Who is going to feel the stress? What is the "system"? The "system" is the embodiment of the world as we know it. It is not something with an objective or agenda of its own. This is commonly understood. The connotation is that something is being done in a way that makes things run less than smoothly. But does the "system" actually FEEL "stressed"? When someone says, "I'm going to beat the system," what does this mean? Does the "system" have a name, a face? Is it personal?

When Paul writes in Romans 8:22, "…the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now," does anyone believe that planets, stars, trees, rocks, etc.—part of the creation—actually "groan and travail in pain"? Of course not! In I Corinthians 11:14, Paul asked, "Does not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" Is nature running an academic curriculum? Again, of course not.

Paul should be able to make such statements without inviting overanalysis of his words, with the reader coming to unfounded conclusions. As a teacher, Paul is simply attributing emotion to things that obviously have none. Poets do this all the time. Their writings are generally not overanalyzed to the point of gross contortion of the basic intended meaning. So we ask: Why are not Paul's other writings examined in a consistent light? This is because another spiritual element comes into play when the words of God, as opposed to a poet or prose writer, are the subject of the study. Recall: "the carnal mind is enmity [hostile] against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom 8:7). Human beings naturally do not want to obey God.

Two Characteristics of the Holy Spirit

Let's now examine certain characteristics of the Holy Spirit and ask whether they can be those of a person.

For example: Can a person be distributed? The obvious answer is no. However, the Holy Spirit can be. Notice: "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

On the Day of Pentecost, many were filled with the Holy Spirit. This marked the beginning of the New Testament Church. If the Holy Spirit were a person, this miracle could not have taken place since it is not possible to be filled with a person. Also recall that many believe one either has the Holy Spirit or does not—the amount cannot vary. If this is the case, all Christians in every age would have to be filled with the Spirit.

Do not allow an intellectual trinitarian response to this such as "the Holy Spirit is God, so normal rules do not apply" to confuse you. On this basis, no Bible passage could ever mean what it said because every passage came from God.

In Acts 2:17-18, Peter, quoting Joel 2:28-29, said, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy."

Can a person be poured? Are Christ and the Father ever referred to as being poured out? Again, do not fall for an intellectual dismissal of this with the simple assertion that "the Holy Spirit is God, so forget all rules." We will revisit this later.

More Aspects of the Holy Spirit

The Greeks believed that the gods were in everything. This is what led them to "create" their own "gods many and lords many," believing they had to put a separate god in every conceivable kind of inanimate object. (Recall that the Greeks had at least 30,000 gods.)

The true God—the Father and Christ—are in one place, but can be everywhere at once (omnipresent) through the power of the Holy Spirit. Their bodies are not spread throughout the universe like a kind of amorphous nebula. Notice what David wrote in the Psalms: "Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I ascend up into heaven, You are there: if I make my bed in [the grave], behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Your hand lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me" (Psa. 139:7-10).

Paul exhorted Timothy to "stir up the gift of God, which is in you by the putting on of my hands" (II Tim. 1:6). Here, God's Spirit is referred to as a gift that one must stir up within a Christian's mind. Can a person be stirred? Is the Holy Spirit a kind of "genie in a lamp," asleep until summoned?

At baptism and conversion, Christians are given a "measure" of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:7). Can one receive a measure of a person? No, but they can get a measure of power, which must be continually exercised to grow. Paul wrote, "I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:19). A Christian has been given a supply of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ. If it is not constantly replenished, that Spirit will run out, potentially until it is completely gone (Heb. 6:4-6).

As Matthew 25:14-30 shows, those who do not exercise God's Spirit and "bring forth much

fruit" (John 15:5, 16) will not be given eternal life in God's kingdom. II Corinthians 4:16 shows that through enduring trials and suffering, a Christian increases his supply of the Holy Spirit: "For which cause [strong persecution] we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

Notice also that the Holy Spirit must be renewed: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). This verse is referring to the Holy Spirit at work in a Christian's mind. To renew something is to keep it active or current.

When someone renews his driver's license, it is so he can continue to legally operate an automobile. The license itself cannot drive, but empowers the individual to do so. Unless it is renewed every three to four years, one will lose his driving privilege. Figuratively, the Holy Spirit is the same. Unless renewed, one will lose the privilege of receiving eternal life.

A person cannot be renewed. But an "amount" of something can be. If it is a person, it is either there or it is not! There can be no in-between.

Blaspheming the Holy Spirit

In Matthew 12:31-32, Christ stated, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy [Spirit] shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaks against the Holy [Spirit], it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

What does this mean—what is the sin that Christ warns against?

To speak against the Holy Spirit (often called "the unpardonable sin") is to knowingly deny the power of God. Notice the context of Christ's warning. He had just cast out a demon (vs. 22)—and the Pharisees accused Him of performing this miracle by the power of Satan (vs. 24). They recognized that Christ was from God, yet accused Him anyway. Notice John 3:2: "[Nicodemus] came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that You do, except God be with him."

Nicodemus said, "we know." He was referring to himself and the other Pharisees. Since these leaders were well aware of the power by which Christ performed miracles, He warned about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit behind them.

The other way one can commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is by allowing it to be quenched after having received it. Notice: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy [Spirit], and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6). Being enlightened (understanding the truth) can only happen when one has received the Holy Spirit (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; I Peter 1:22).

"Falling away" is not instantaneous. When one's eyes have been opened to God's truth and he continues to sin willfully—to ignore warnings from God's Spirit within his mind—he WILL eventually lose it. Once this happens, he has committed the unforgivable sin. Christ was

warning against far more than the utterance of blasphemous words. (You are urged to read our thorough booklet Just What Is "The Unpardonable Sin"? to fully understand.)

Analogies of the Spirit

The Bible uses many analogies to show how the Holy Spirit works within a Christian's mind. None of them attribute any qualities of "personhood."

(1) God's Word likens the Holy Spirit to WIND: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2).

Christ likened those born as Spirit beings into the kingdom of God to wind: "The wind blows where it lists, and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell [from where] it comes, and where it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).

Wind can be powerful, as in the case of a tornado or hurricane, or it can be gentle. The same is true of the Holy Spirit. God used it to create the heavens and the earth, but He also can use it to gently mold a Christian's character into perfection.

(2) The Holy Spirit is also compared to OIL. As a spiritual "lubricant," it is comforting (John 14:26) and keeps God's people cool. Oil is also burned as a fuel to create fire, produce light (Matt. 5:14; 25:1-8) and generate heat (Rev. 3:15). Christians are to be the lights of the world and the Holy Spirit is the fuel that powers them. (Again, review Matthew 25:1-12.)

We are also anointed by the Spirit, just like an anointing of oil: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61:1). Also see I John 2:27, describing conversion itself as an anointing.

(3) The Holy Spirit is likened to FIRE. Notice: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:3-4).

Again, II Timothy 1:6 shows that, like a fire, the Holy Spirit must be constantly stirred up within each Christian: "Wherefore I put you in remembrance that you stir up the gift of God, which is in you by the putting on of my hands."

Paul also exhorted, "Quench not the Spirit" (I Thes. 5:19). Quenching the Spirit is like quenching thirst or fire—when you quench either, you extinguish it. In the case of the Holy Spirit, this is done by "smothering it" with wrong thoughts, or by continual sin. Obviously, a person cannot be "quenched"!

(4) God's Word also likens the Holy Spirit to WATER. Nobody can live physically without water, and nobody can live spiritually (or eternally) without the Holy Spirit. Christ stated, in John 7:38-39, "He that believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

(5) Byproducts of the Holy Spirit are compared to FRUIT. Fruit helps to cleanse the physical body. The Holy Spirit helps to cleanse God's children spiritually. Fruit also provides instant energy to the body: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23). Allowing the mind to be guided by the Holy Spirit automatically yields the above "fruit," which cleanses one of "spiritual toxins," and provides power to continue.

Just as no one can live physically without food, Christians must feed upon the fruits of the

Tree of Life (the Holy Spirit) in order to live spiritually (I Cor. 15:21-22; John 6:30-35; Rev. 2:17).

(6) The Holy Spirit is also a GIFT: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit then brings with it potentially a whole series of gifts (I Cor. 12:1-11).

(7) Also, to show that Christians are to be gentle and peaceable, we saw that the Holy Spirit is likened to a DOVE. Notice: "Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him" (Matt. 3:16).

Genesis 8:8-12 records that Noah sent out a dove "to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground," so that he could be led in what to do. In like manner, Christians are guided by the Holy Spirit in their minds.

Exactly What Is the Holy Spirit?

Many examples demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is neither a third of one amorphous being, nor a separate entity of a triune god. Let's ask again, what is it?

The Holy Spirit is the life (and very mind) of God. Jesus Christ lived by the Spirit of the Father dwelling within Him. Just as the Father dwelled within Christ through the Holy Spirit and gave Him life, Jesus lives within His followers through the Spirit and gives them life—eternal life. Notice Christ's description of His relationship with the Father:

- "As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats Me, even he shall live by Me" (John 6:57).
- "For as the Father has life in Himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John 5:26).

With this eternal life (the Holy Spirit) dwelling inside God's people, they can also become one with Christ and the Father. As the Father and Son are of the same mind and the same accord, so are Christians to be (Phil. 2:2).

Becoming one with God and Christ is only possible through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Ponder the following scriptures, asking why there is no reference to the Holy Spirit:

- "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30).
- "But if I do, though you believe not Me, believe the works: that you may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him" (John 10:38).
- "At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you" (John 14:20).
- "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are" (John 17:11).
- "That they all may BE ONE; as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may BE ONE IN US: that the world may believe that You have sent Me" (John 17:21).

Where is the trinity in all these verses—including the Holy Spirit? How are they reconciled with Christians becoming one with the Father and Christ, apart from the Holy Spirit—and when it is supposedly the only one of the three persons in us?

I repeat: the Holy Spirit is the power of God. When the term "power" is used today (for instance: "By the power vested in me…"), it never implies that such power does something of its own accord. It is understood that someone is using that power, wielding it—exercising it—distributing it—to accomplish something. Does electricity have a mind of its own? Does nuclear energy? Does solar power? All sources of power are used to do various kinds of work and must be replenished. The same is true of God's Spirit.

A fascinating passage proves that power flowed from Christ in Mark 5:25-30: "A certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched His garment. For she said, If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that virtue [Greek: dunamis, meaning power] had gone out of Him, turned Him about in the press, and said, Who touched My clothes?"

Think of it this way. When you work hard and perspire, your body loses vital nutrients that must be replenished. This parallels what happened to Christ. The Holy Spirit was like a "vital nutrient" that flowed from Jesus. It needed replenishment. Also notice the following verses, and think about them in this context:

- "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:13).
- "But you shall receive power, after that the Holy [Spirit] is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

It is this very power that allowed Jesus to perform the many miracles that He did. The Father was with Jesus through the Spirit dwelling in Him. Jesus had no power in and of Himself to do anything:

- "I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which has sent Me" (John 5:30).
- "Then said Jesus unto them, When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things" (John 8:28).

Having emptied Himself from the Godhead to become a human being, Jesus needed the Holy Spirit. So do you and I. If He could do nothing of Himself, how much can we do of ourselves? Absolutely nothing.

Reasons the Holy Spirit Is Given

Most professing Christians understand that Jesus Christ is to be our example (John 13:15; I Pet. 2:21), and that we are to copy His life in our own. The way He lived, His sufferings and His overcoming the world are all things we must be aware of and partake of. His birth, death and Resurrection are examples that reveal the role of the Holy Spirit in God's Plan for mankind.

We saw that Christ was begotten by the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit. Unlike human beings, He had no physical father. The Holy Spirit is the means by which the Father begets His sons. Just as Christ was begotten by the Father, Christians also are begotten by

Him. The difference is that Christians are begotten outside the womb, and are not given the Holy Spirit until after baptism (Acts 2:38). Once baptized and given the Holy Spirit, Christians become begotten sons of God—not yet born. But the time will come when they will be raised from the dead by the power of God's Spirit dwelling within them—just as Christ was.

God also uses His Spirit to TEACH His people: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, [it] shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). "Howbeit when [it], the Spirit of truth, is come, [it] will guide you into all truth…" (John 16:13).

Again, a mind without the Holy Spirit cannot comprehend spiritual things. It has no hope of understanding God's Word—the Bible. It is only through the indwelling of the Spirit that one is able to understand the mind of God. Reread I Corinthians 2:9-16.

The above scriptures, including I Corinthians 2:9-16, can be summarized in the following way: Those who are being guided by the Holy Spirit CAN understand spiritual things, and those who are not being led by the Holy Spirit cannot understand– it is IMPOSSIBLE! Just as one cannot know the thoughts of another person, neither can you know the thoughts of God. In a sense, God's Spirit is "projected" into our minds, allowing us to comprehend "the things of God."

The Holy Spirit also STRENGTHENS Christians in many important ways. The following longer scripture is one of the most inspiring in the entire Bible, and best describes how God's Spirit directly empowers—strengthens—those who have it: "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH MIGHT BY HIS SPIRIT in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKS IN US …" (Eph. 3:16-20).

Christ gives His servants the strength needed to overcome what could be called the three "S's"—self, Satan and society, which produce a fourth "S," SIN. All real overcoming is done by the power of the Holy Spirit. Just as Jesus could only overcome by the Father dwelling within Him through the Spirit, it is through that Spirit dwelling within a person that overcoming anything spiritual is possible.

Why Some WILL NOT Understand!

An inset must be added here. It will explain why some people CANNOT possibly UNDERSTAND what is contained in this volume. This point is connected to an earlier section, which discussed how the Holy Spirit is poured out and can fill people, thus disqualifying it as a person.

Here is an example of how some will take that easy-to-understand explanation and dismiss it by bringing in wrong "facts," wrong logic, wrong reasoning and/or wrong understanding—thus trapping themselves in wrong teaching.

Some suggest that Psalm 22:14 proves that a person can be poured, because Christ said that He was "poured out" and He was a person. The conclusion then is that the Holy Spirit can also be poured out and still be a person.

In this passage, Christ is describing His crucifixion: "I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint: My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels."

It is probably immediately obvious to most that Christ is talking about how all of His blood poured out of His body, ending His life. Numerous verses reveal Christians are forgiven, or

justified, by Christ's shed blood (Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:12). Isaiah 53:12 states that He "poured out His soul unto death." Obviously, soul here means His blood—His life. (See Leviticus 17:11.) This passage in no way proves that the Holy Spirit is a person that can be poured out.

Why cannot the logic explained here be accepted by some? Why do most feel compelled to fight sound analysis, sound reasoning and sound logic? Why also will the plain explanations found throughout this book upset and confuse many of its readers? The answer lies in the fact that these things alone—sound analysis, sound reasoning and sound logic—are not sufficient to defeat the illogic of a mind to whom God has not revealed Himself (Rom. 1:28; 8:7). Remember, God must call a person (John 6:44, 65) and must reveal Himself to that person for him to be able to grasp spiritual truths and principles (I Cor. 2:11).

Therefore, understand that this book is not written to the majority who read it. At least grasp this point! Do not miss it. For you to truly comprehend all that you are studying, God must be opening your mind through the power of His Holy Spirit. Otherwise, there is no hope of understanding. Perhaps take the time to read Matthew 7:7 for what you can also do.

All Are Deceived

The Bible is filled with instruction about the Holy Spirit. But in a world completely overcome with Satan's "wiles" (Eph. 6:11) and "devices" (II Cor. 2:11), it is only through God's help that you can be an exception.

However, you must be willing to admit that the realm of traditional Christianity (and the world in general) has remained ignorant of what the Holy Spirit is. Naturally, this has contributed to why the nature of God so completely escapes their comprehension.

Just as the world has not understood the Holy Spirit or its role, or the Father and who He is, it has not understood the true Jesus Christ of the Bible. The apostle Paul warned of those who unknowingly follow "another Jesus."

The next chapter could be the most stunning chapter in the book!

Another Jesus

By now it is understood that there are several different kinds of spirit. There is the Spirit of God, the spirit in man, the spirit of which angels are composed—and this same kind of spirit, which exists in fallen angels, described in the Bible as the devil and his demons.

We have also seen that there are many gods worshipped around the world within the thousands of religions invented by men. Many of these gods are seen to be, and worshipped as, the "father of creation" and the "father of mankind."

By now it is also clear that two of the beings in the supposed biblical triune godhead are thought to be the Father and the Holy Spirit. And we saw that this teaching is a counterfeit of the true God of the Bible, and that all of this is largely hidden—concealed—from the world. However, within this counterfeit is an additional counterfeit, which must now be exposed. This other counterfeit is perhaps the most dangerous and sinister part of all that is wrong with the doctrine of the trinity! We will see that this second counterfeit within the overall trinity god counterfeit is directly connected to a counterfeit spirit. It is this different spirit that is giving life to the idea that the trinity is biblical.

The apostle Paul warned the Corinthian congregation of a special kind of danger, which is connected to forgetting that there is "simplicity in Christ." The result is that they were allowing themselves to be "beguiled" by Satan who was corrupting their minds into false understanding.

What would this be?

First, read Paul's entire introduction to the warning: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent [Satan] beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:3).

Now let's notice the actual warning in the next verse: "For if he that comes preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if you receive another spirit, which you have not received, or another gospel, which you have not accepted, you might well bear with him." The Corinthians seemed to "bear with" this without resistance.

Paul, inspired by the true Jesus Christ of the Bible, was moved to record the peril of unwittingly following "another Jesus." Consider. Whomever you may think this false Jesus to be —and most have probably never remotely considered the idea for even a moment—there is such a thing as a wrong, different and false Jesus—called "another Jesus." This "Jesus" can even corrupt the thinking of true Christians. This much is plain. But the "subtlety" of how this can occur, and how it has occurred in history, is so deceptive—so seductive—that even true Christians can unknowingly slip into worshipping this so-called Jesus. This is what was happening to the Corinthians.

When one examines the facts of history, it becomes evident that Christianity brought a

different Jesus, and with it came a different gospel born of a different spirit, which introduced a different god—and this god took the form of the trinity.

When fully understood, those who believe that God is three-in-one—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—are worshipping ANOTHER JESUS inside the trinity!

This is a serious charge, and it requires serious proof, which this book will provide. We have seen that the trinity does not come from the Bible—but what about the "Jesus" worshipped by billions today?

Which Savior?

One of the central themes of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ came as Savior to die for mankind's sins and to offer redemption to a world cut off from God.

The MASTER COUNTERFEITER (Satan the devil, who we have seen is called the "god of this world" in II Cor. 4:4) seeks to counterfeit every aspect of God's plan. We saw that he "deceives the whole world" (Rev. 12:9). As the ARCH-DECEIVER, he would not be content to counterfeit all other aspects of Christianity but not the identity and worship of the true Savior!

Who is the real "savior" central to modern Christendom? Is it the Jesus Christ of the Bible? If you say "yes," are you sure? What proof do you have?

History answers this question plainly. A series of powerful quotes will momentarily introduce virtually all of the elements central to the belief of the Jesus of the Bible—but they will be seen to be unconnected to the true Jesus of the Bible. As you read later, notice the astonishing parallel between the "saviors" found throughout ancient religion and the popular "savior" worshipped today. It is also a fact that these ancient counterfeit saviors were always worshipped in conjunction with springtime festivals of renewal. The modern face of these festivals is the pagan Easter celebration.

Does the Bible mention Easter?

Easter—Condemned in the Bible!

It will come as a surprise to most that Easter is mentioned repeatedly in the Bible—but never in a good context. In fact, God condemns it in the strongest possible terms. We will see that Easter is interwoven with the worship of Baal and sun worship.

Before dismissing this knowledge, force yourself to consider the facts of history. It is vital to understand the origin of Easter, and its connection to the Jesus worshipped by millions, because this spring celebration is considered the holiest in the Christian calendar.

So then, who or what is Easter? From where does this term derive?

The following sources answer the question: "What means the term Easter itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven…Now, the Assyrian goddess, or Astarte, is identified with Semiramis by Athenagoras (Legatio, vol. ii. p. 179), and by Lucian (De Dea Syria, vol. iii. p. 382)…Now, no name could more exactly picture forth the character of Semiramis, as queen of Babylon, than the name of 'Asht-tart,' for that just means 'The woman that made towers'…Ashturit, then…is obviously the same as the Hebrew 'Ashtoreth'" (Alexander Hislop, The Two Babylons, pp. 103, 307-308, emphasis ours).

Notice this conclusive quote from Microsoft Encarta Multimedia Encyclopedia: "Ishtar was the Great Mother, the goddess of fertility and the queen of heaven." In Jeremiah 7:18, God condemned baking cakes (hot cross buns) to the "queen of heaven." Ashtaroth (Ishtar) was

Nimrod's (Gen. 10:8-10) harlotrous, mother/wife widow, Semiramis, as many other ancient historians attest! Easter is now established as none other than the Ashtaroth of the Bible!

Easter, Baal and Israel

Now that we know that Easter is the goddess Ashtaroth, we need to look into the Bible and see what God thinks of her, and notice her connection to Baal.

This first of two sources about Baal comes from Encyclopaedia Britannica, and it begins to connect Baal to Ashtaroth: "The Semitic word baal, meaning owner or master, was also used in ancient religions for lord or god, and it is still defined as a Canaanite or Phoenician deity. Among the greatest of the Semitic peoples' deities were Baal and Astarte—both symbols of fertility. Baal, the god of the sun, was supposed to make crops grow and flocks increase. Astarte [was] the goddess of the moon…"

Nimrod

Now read this quote from The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition: "Baal had become the ruler of the universe. The Ugarit tablets make him chief of the Canaanite pantheon. He is the source of life and fertility, the mightiest hero, the lord of war, and the defeater of the god Yam. There were many temples of Baal in Canaan, and the name Baal was often added to that of a locality, e.g., Baal-peor, Baal-hazor, Baal-hermon. The Baal cult penetrated Israel and at times led to syncretism…The practice of sacred prostitution seems to have been associated with the worship of Baal in Palestine and the cult was vehemently denounced by the prophets…" (emphasis ours).

Baal was the most popular and powerful god of his time, considered to be "ruler of the universe." Israel wanted to be associated with—to worship—both Baal and the true God. Hence, the above reference to "syncretism," which is the mixing of true and false religion—the worship of the true God mixed with customs, practices and worship of other gods.

Merging worship of God with Baal worship was Israel's problem. Remember, it led Elijah to indict all Israel: "How long halt you between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (I Kgs. 18:21).

Now let's examine Israel's involvement with Baal and Ashtaroth: "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD… And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth [Easter]" (Judges 2:11, 13).

The context of the passage shows that God allowed His people to be taken from their land into foreign captivity as a result of this sin! It continues, explaining how God delivered His people over and over again through a series of judges. After each deliverance, Israel returned to the same false gods, which in turn brought another captivity, via conquest by the nations around them. They never seemed to learn, as verse 19 makes clear: "And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves…in following other

gods…and…they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way." In chapter 10, verse 6, Israel repeats this pattern of rebellion and stubbornness. And God, just as insistently, called it evil—as He still does today.

Baal and Ashtaroth worship reappeared during the prophet Samuel's time. Samuel told Israel, "…put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve Him only…Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served theLORDonly" (I Sam. 7:3-4). Later, in I Samuel 12:10-11, Samuel publicly recounted Israel's history to them. He reminded them that they continually returned to obeying God, only to fall backwards into idolatry again and again!

Let's read one final example. The Bible states that King Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived. Yet, he made a mistake that God considered so great that, after his death, He punished Solomon by removing the kingdom from his son.

His mistake?

He married a woman who led him into the worship of Easter (Ashtaroth). Notice I Kings 11:4-6: "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods…For Solomon went after Ashtaroth the goddess of the Zidonians…And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father." Verses 11-12 demonstrate that the kingdom was, in fact, taken from his son.

God considered worship of this goddess as outright "evil." This was even though Solomon was only "not fully" seeking the true God.

It has been said that "The only thing man has learned from history is that no one learns from history." George Santayana took it further, stating, as we saw, "Those who do not learn the lesson of history are condemned to repeat it."

This lesson describes ancient Israel—but it also describes today's modern world. Because Israel could not stay on track, they were taken into captivity, eventually becoming lost to history! (After one more captivity and punishment, prophecy reveals that God will gather them from captivity one final time just before Christ's Return.)

What History Reveals

We can now examine the astonishing record from history, and allow it to expose the popular "Jesus" worshipped today for who he really is. Prepare to be stunned—and, hopefully, even more deeply motivated to take action about all you are learning!

First, there is this: "…the conception of a Saviour-God was quite normal in the ancient pagan world…a conception of salvation underlies the notion of such Gods as Osiris, Attis, and Adonis…" (John M. Robertson, Christianity and Mythology, p. 395).

And then this incredible admission: "It has often been urged that this belief in the Resurrection of Jesus is due to ideas of divine resurrection current in the contemporary world… stories of Attis, Adonis, and Osiris…In the pagan stories the rising again is a joyous reversal of defeat; in the Christian story it is the complement of victorious death. It may be said that Attis and Osiris saved by rising again, Jesus by dying…the Easter observance did not arise at once out of belief in the Resurrection, but developed later by gradual stages out of the Jewish Pasch. The notion implied in the Easter greeting Christ is risen is a secondary development; the idea comes from this festival and from its occurrence in spring; the festival does not come from the idea. The idea of Christ's resurrection was injected into the old practice of Easter observance and not the other way around" (A. Nock, Early Gentile Christianity and its Hellenistic Background, pp. 105-107, emphasis ours throughout).

The powerful theme of this oft-repeated counterfeit is made absolutely clear by the famous historian, James George Frazer: "Now the death and resurrection of Attis were officially celebrated at Rome on the 24th and 25th of March, the latter being regarded as the spring equinox, and…according to an ancient and widespread tradition Christ suffered on the 25th of March…the tradition which placed the death of Christ on the 25th of March…is all the more remarkable because astronomical considerations prove that it can have had no historical foundation…When we remember that the festival of St. George in April has replaced the ancient pagan festival of the Parilia; that the festival of St. John the Baptist in June has succeeded to a heathen Midsummer festival of water; that the festival of the Assumption of the Virgin in August has ousted the festival of Diana; that the feast of All Souls [Halloween] in November is a continuation of an old heathen feast of the dead; and that the Nativity of Christ himself was assigned to the winter solstice in December because that day was deemed the Nativity of the Sun; we can hardly be thought to be rash or unreasonable in conjecturing that the other cardinal festival of the Christian church—the solemnization of Easter—may have been in like manner, and from like motives of edification, adapted to a similar celebration of the Phyrigian god Attis at the vernal equinox…It is a remarkable coincidence…that the Christian and the heathen festivals of the divine death and resurrection should have been solemnized at the same season…It is difficult to regard the coincidence as purely accidental" (The Golden Bough, Vol. I, pp. 306-309, emphasis ours).

While extensive, this next and final source is perhaps the most powerful—and the most fascinating to understand. Let its message crash on your ears: "The similarity of ancient pagan legends and beliefs with Christian traditions was so great that they excited the attention and undisquised [sic] wrath of the early Christian…not knowing how to explain it. Tertulian said, 'The Devil, by the mysteries of his idols, imitates even the main part of the divine mysteries.' Furthermore Cortez, too, complained that the Devil had possibly taught the Mexicans that same thing that God taught Christendom. The common idea is that pagan gods fled away at Christ's coming, yet it is well known to every Bible student [that] this is contrary to fact. At the time of the recorded appearance of Jesus, and for some centuries before, there were temples without dedicated to Apollo or Dionysius among the Greeks, or Hercules among the Romans, Mithra among the Persians, Baal and Astarte among the Babylonians, and temples dedicated to other gods. An outstanding phenomenon is apparent: notwithstanding great geographic distance, racial difference between cults and in detail of services, the general outline of creeds and ceremonies were—if not identical—markedly similar. A fact that cannot be considered coincidental is, that of 11 main deities from the seven countries, it was believed of all or nearly all that these deities' births were on or near Christmas, of a virgin mother, in a cave underground, that they led a life of toil for man. They were thought to have been light bringers, healers, mediators, and into saviors. They were vanguished [sic] by the power of darkness, descended into hell or the underworld, to have arisen to become pioneers of mankind to a heavenly world…Krishna [part of the Hindu trinity], the god of India is an outstanding example of a parallel with the life of Christ. The idea of God sacrificing his son for the salvation of the world is so remote and remarkable—yet it ranges through all ancient religion and back to the earliest times and is embodied in their rituals" (Edward Carpenter, Pagan and Christian Creeds).

We can summarize the last two sources. The universal church at Rome had a practice of incorporating pagan festivals—of pasting "Christian" names over them and calling them "Christian." This was done to make Christianity more palatable and familiar to heathen worshippers, whom the Church was trying to attract. It became easy—natural—for the masses

who were accepting Christianity to be permitted to bring the familiar customs, traditions and beliefs about their own "savior" into worship of the new "savior," from then on to be referred to as Jesus.

While the purpose of this book is not to thoroughly cover the entire history and origin of this different "Jesus," a brief summary and one more revealing statement from history is helpful.

The Mother and the Savior

Semiramis (Easter) was both the mother and wife of Nimrod, described in Genesis 10:8-10, who was the great-grandson of Noah and the original Baal. In a blatant attempt to rebel against God shortly after the Flood—and the Tower of Babel was built so that civilization would be impervious to "any other flood that God might bring"—history shows that this mother/son duo appointed themselves as gods to be worshipped. History also records that Noah's son, Shem (Nimrod's great-uncle), eventually tracked down and killed Nimrod, and sent his body parts throughout his kingdom. (This is also what happened to Osiris, the "father" in the Egyptian trinity with Horus and Isis.) Semiramis fled for her life, only to return 30 years later with her younger son, Horus (the son in the Egyptian trinity), whom she said was born supernaturally and was the reincarnation of Nimrod—the resurrected savior! Nimrod was Horus' supposed father, and Semiramis claimed that she had immaculately conceived him. She also claimed that she came from the moon in a giant egg that fell into the Euphrates river and that this occurred after the spring equinox on the first full moon. This moon egg was known as Ishtar's (pronounced Easter's) Egg. She reinstituted worship of herself and Nimrod, calling herself the mother of god and queen of heaven, among other things by saying that Nimrod symbolized the sun as it "died" during the long cold winter. She also taught that Nimrod was resurrected, and that his son Horus was resurrected to join him in heaven, and Nimrod's resurrection was represented by the sun returning each spring to warm the earth and renew life. While there is much more to the story than can be included here, Semiramis' new "mystery system" eventually spread to all the peoples of the earth, as the earlier sources reveal. (To understand much more, read our two booklets The True Origin of Easter and The True Origin of Christmas.)

Horus, the Egyptian version of Nimrod's son.

Now notice this quote from the Creation Epic, speaking of Nimrod, the original "savior" of the world: "As for us, by however many names we call him, he is our god! Let us proclaim his 50 names…"

Here are a few of them from history, many of which God condemned Israel for having followed: Nimrod, Molech, Chemosh, Baal, Milcom, Bacchus, Dagon, Osiris, Saturn, Adonis, Cupid, Apis, Volcon, Attis, Kronos and Tammuz, the son in the Babylonian trinity with Ninas (Nimrod) and Ishtar (Easter). (Ezekiel 8:14-16 directly connects Tammuz—the resurrected son of, and reincarnation of, Nimrod—to sunrise services and sun worship, which God calls an

abomination.)

It can now be better understood why the apostle Paul wrote the Corinthians to beware of the subtle deceit of "another Jesus whom we have not preached." The original apostles understood that "another" very different "Jesus" whom they had "not preached" had existed for millennia.

Bible "believers" today can think that they are worshipping the true Savior when they are really worshipping a false savior—another Jesus! The entirety of traditional Christianity is actually worshipping Baal, the mediator and sun god, who was named after his "wife" Ishtar (who we have seen was really his mother Semiramis).

The modern mother/child "Mary/Jesus" emphasis, including the worshipful adoration of Mary by millions, is a parallel with Semiramis and Nimrod that cannot be missed.

People can worship in ways that represent things that are far different from what they sincerely believe or intend. Grasp what is at stake with another Jesus. With a different savior and "Jesus," ultimately comes a different "mediator," "high priest," "shepherd," "bishop of our souls," "apostle," "king of kings," "lord of lords," and all the other titles and functions of Christ.

The problem is that when one leaves the "simplicity in Christ," the result is to soon be unwittingly following a very different Christ.

But the problem is even worse than this.

Paul spoke of "another gospel" and "another spirit," appearing in conjunction with this other "Jesus." Therefore, we must next examine a combination of several related questions, including: What is the gospel? Is Jesus part of it? And what is the Body of Christ?

We will also tie all of this to which spirit has been guiding the religions and churches of the world!

"Another Gospel"

First let's address the question of what is the gospel. Almost everyone believes that the gospel is about the Person of Jesus Christ. Preachers speak incessantly of "Jesus," His "blood" and His "sacrifice." Certainly, the true Jesus Christ plays an extremely important and central role to Christianity, but He is not the gospel. The Bible shows that Jesus is preached in conjunction with the gospel. Again, His role is enormous. But He is not the gospel.

It is important to take some extra time at this point to make very plain the clear distinction between the role of Christ and what is the true gospel. Much more is at stake here than meets the eye—and virtually all professing Christians have been badly fooled on what is the very CENTERPIECE of the entire Bible! It is critical that the reader understand how all of this is connected to both another "Jesus" and another "spirit."

While there are a variety of gospels invented and taught by men, far and away the most popular is the one that centers on the person of Jesus. But if the gospel is not Christ Himself, what is it?

Only the Kingdom of God!

The New Testament is plain on the subject of the true gospel. The word gospel is found 101 times in the Bible. In scores of verses, the gospel is referenced—defined!—as "the kingdom of God," "the kingdom," "the kingdom of Christ and of God" or "the kingdom of [not in] heaven." Sometimes the word is found alone, and sometimes "of the kingdom" follows it. Other times, it includes "of the kingdom of God," or the equivalent phrase "of the kingdom of heaven." It is never seen to be or to include the person of Jesus Christ. I repeat: Nowhere in the Bible—in

even a single passage—is the gospel described as "Jesus," "Christ" or "Jesus Christ."

Notice Mark's account: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD." This is the gospel that Jesus preached. It was in this same context that He said, "repent you, and believe the gospel" (1:14-15). Which gospel?… of the "kingdom of God!"

Verse 1 in Mark refers to this message, when it states, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." The gospel of Jesus Christ was about the KINGDOM OF GOD—not something else! One must believe that gospel—not a humanly-devised counterfeit or substitute. The second question —that of which is the true gospel—stands on top of, and is separate from, the question of which Jesus orthodox Christianity places at the center of its gospel about "Christ." It is always a different one!

The Bible is absolutely emphatic on the monumental difference between the Messenger—Jesus Christ—and the Message that He brought—the kingdom of God (His coming, world-ruling SUPERGOVERNMENT). Many have tried to say that the term "the gospel of Christ" is a gospel about Christ. This is simply FALSE—because the preposition "of" merely connotes possession. The message about the kingdom of God is Christ's gospel—meaning, it is His—and this is all very basic understanding from God's Word.

Strong Warning Not to Pervert It

This subject is so important that God inspired Paul to warn the Galatians then and all others thereafter: "I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed" (1:6-9).

This is a very blunt statement—and a strong warning to all who will heed it! Note that one chapter later, Paul stressed his hope that the "truth of the [only one] gospel might continue with you" (2:5). So there is one true gospel—with all others FALSE!

Although some assert that Paul taught a different or additional gospel, it is plain that he never did. Ironically, God used Paul himself to warn against ever allowing such false teaching by pronouncing a double curse on any man, angel or even any apostle—"But though we [apostles]… preach any other gospel…let him be accursed" (1:8)—who violates this command.

What a powerful scripture—and WARNING!

What Paul Preached

In I Thessalonians 2:4, Paul explained that the apostles were entrusted by God to preserve the true gospel. Notice: "But as we [apostles] were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which tries our hearts."

This is a responsibility not to be taken lightly. True ministers must always teach what God commands—not what pleases men (including Bible "scholars" and "theologians"). Any claim that Paul taught a different or "second" gospel (usually thought to be either about Christ or of "peace") is impossible. Had he done this, he would literally have been pronouncing a curse on himself!

Paul was commissioned to preach to the Gentiles. First, Acts 19:8 establishes which gospel

he preached: "And he went into the synagogue, and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." In many of his epistles, he taught the kingdom to Gentile congregations. His message was always the same. He continually preached, taught and referred to the kingdom of God.

Next, Paul states in Acts 20:25, 21, "I have gone preaching the kingdom of God…repentance toward God, ANDfaith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." He preached the same gospel to both Jew and Gentile, but preached the truth about Christ's role in addition to the gospel of the kingdom.

Now notice Acts 28:30-31: "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, ANDteaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ." Of course, Jesus is foretold to rule the entire earth when He returns and establishes His kingdom. But He stands alongside the true gospel about that kingdom.

Do not lose sight of this! The role of Jesus Christ is separate—distinctly different—from the gospel!

Some get confused when they read I Corinthians 15:1-4, thinking that Paul contradicts himself from other passages we have seen by appearing to state that "the gospel" (vs. 1) is "how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day" (vs. 3-4). Simply note that "the gospel" reference in verse 1 is not connected to Christ's death and burial in verses 3 and 4. Careful reading reveals this.

Since Jesus preached "repent and BELIEVE THE GOSPEL," it should now be clear why both highlighted elements in this passage are in His instruction. His role must always be preached in conjunction with the kingdom of God, because one cannot enter the kingdom unless he understands and accepts that "Christ died for our sins," and has repented of his sins.

"Another Jesus"—Brought by "Another Spirit"

Now pause and grasp the additional seriousness of what else bringing another "gospel" means—the grave danger of what is actually being brought for worship with this revised "gospel." The reader must understand WHY God places a curse on those who pervert the gospel—those who blur or confuse His literally "Genesis-to-Revelation" announcement about His soon-coming WORLD GOVERNMENT.

The attempt to bring Jesus into the gospel is not only wrong in itself, but it derives from a much greater danger, not only that of "another Jesus," but one born of "another spirit." The Corinthians were falling into belief in "another gospel" and "another Jesus," and did not recognize that these were connected to a third problem—that of following "another SPIRIT."

The apostle John labels this alien spirit the "spirit of error," and contrasts it to the "Spirit of truth" (I John 4:6). Take a moment to read this verse, remembering that Christians have been "begotten" with the Spirit of truth, which the apostle James explained is the same as the "Word of truth" (Jms. 1:18). It is this SPIRIT OF ERROR that is guiding the churches of professing Christianity in its many denominations and branches—which spirit we will learn is connected to a counterfeit "body of Christ." This is why deceived theologians have devised the false triune god.

Recognize the extreme gravity here. Understand why it is absolutely VITAL to get this point clear in your mind!

Extreme Danger!

Another critically important element ties in here, and is connected directly to the Church that

Christ has built (Matt. 16:18)—the only Church where the true Christ is leading His true Work, and the true gospel is being preached. The living Jesus Christ has always worked exclusively leading only ONE, unified, organized, uncompromising Church—the biblical Body of Christ.

In summary, the "Christian" world teaches that the Body of Christ—Jesus' Church—consists of many denominations, fellowships or "communities of believers," said to all be connected by the "Holy Spirit" working in believers wherever they are affiliated. (Many, many sources attest to this thinking.) But this is totally contrary to I Corinthians 1:10 and 13, and 12:1-31, Ephesians 4:2-16, John 15, Matthew 12:25-30—and to all of what the Bible teaches about the Body of Christ. This substitute—counterfeit—idea asserts, in effect, that Christ and His Body are divided among many groups.

Here is what the reader must be able to recognize: The entire professing Christian world believes in a different (counterfeit) "body" of a different (counterfeit) "Christ," emanating from an entirely different (counterfeit) "SPIRIT" that is not the Spirit of God. All of these confused, competing churches are led by the "spirit of disobedience" that is identified in Ephesians 2:2—and shown to be sent from the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4)! Then recognize that this is the god behind the trinity! We will discuss this "disobedient spirit" shortly.

The Protestants Go Further

The universal church, centered at Rome, and teaching the false doctrine of the trinity, taught that the Body of Christ was solely composed of those within that church. Even though the Roman church had the wrong doctrines, the wrong gospel, the wrong Jesus, the wrong spirit—and the wrong god—their understanding that Christ had an undivided spiritual Body, identified in a single church, was largely correct. Their error was connecting this key doctrine to themselves instead of to the true Church of God—built by the true Jesus Christ, who was sent by the true God, who is working through the true Holy Spirit. This latter Church is one that also understands the many OTHER TRUTHS of God!

Let's understand this by tying together several critical elements that clarify the thinking of the Protestants. When the Protestants rebelled against Rome, they were obviously no longer part of that church, and thus had departed from what they previously believed to have been the Body of Christ. They recognized that Paul taught, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" and "For the body is not one member, but many" (I Cor. 12:13-14).

The entire world of Christendom is able to read these passages, and others, about the Body of Christ. All of these had to be reconciled with the fact that they had now left the Roman church and its authority. But here was their problem: They had to come up with a teaching compatible with converts and believers supposedly being truly baptized, but into a divided, competing and multiplying picture of denominations that is the Protestant world. They had to reconcile the idea of one "Body of Christ" with the reality of hundreds of Protestant denominations, and more appearing all the time. They were forced to conclude that the Body of Christ is composed of many groups, denominations, fellowships and "communities of believers." Within this overall understanding must come the reminder that the professing Christian world, serving the false trinity god, is led by the spirit of the "god of this world." When understood, Christendom would conclude in the end whatever its god led it to conclude—and that would not be what the Bible teaches.

Of course—and this is what the reader must get straight—when the Protestants reinvented the "Body of Christ" doctrine, it was about the "body" of their "Jesus." Although they defined His "body" differently, this was the same Jesus, who was part of the same gospel, both of which

were brought by the same spirit that the counterfeit church from Rome had included within its trinity!

Grasp this. The alien spirit that both John and Paul spoke of is the false counterfeit spirit—SATAN'S SPIRIT—behind the trinity doctrine, the wrong "Jesus" with his counterfeit "body," and the wrong "gospel" of the entire professing Christian world.

Spirit of Disobedience

Let's now revisit the central "earmark" that will always reveal to the discerning observer where the "spirit of disobedience" is at work. This phrase is in the context of Paul reminding the Ephesian congregation how they had come out of a different way of life—described as the "course of this world"—in which they had been under the sway of the "prince of the power of the air." Now notice: "Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the SPIRIT that now works in the children of DISOBEDIENCE" (2:2).

Disobedience is the opposite of obedience, and obedience is something that one either displays toward God, or does not. One either obeys God's Law—the Ten Commandments, of which the first four are a part—or, no matter what reasons he may have or theology he may have accepted about it, he disobeys it!

Almost all of the professing Christian world teaches that God's Law—His Commandments—were "nailed to the cross" by Jesus (now seen to be another one) through His sacrifice. Thousands of preachers tell millions of parishioners every Sunday that "that Old Testament Law" has been "done away" by Christ. They are routinely told, "You do not need to keep it. It was kept for you by Jesus."

Millions believe them!

Had Israel OBEYED the first four commandments—no other gods, no idols or graven images, proper reverence of God's name and observance of the seventh day instead of the first day (Sunday)—she would have remained an example to all nations of how OBEDIENCE to the true God brought all the good things in life. How many other nations might have followed and copied Israel's example? How many supposed gods would have never come into existence? Think about how much confusion and false religion could have been avoided!

But Romans 8:7 has explained to the reader that human beings are naturally hostile to God and His Law. The terrible fruits of that disobedience are the tragic record of humanity's last six millennia.

The true Jesus Christ taught His disciples, "If you will enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17). It is these very commandments that define the love of God, and this is made plain by Romans 13:10 and I John 5:3. Turn and read them, and notice how Paul and John speak of God's Law. While the world also speaks endlessly of "love" with its "Jesus," it is not the REAL love of God that the Bible describes. The "Jesus" of this world brings a very different message about the importance of law-keeping than that of Matthew 19:17, Romans 13:10, I John 5:3 and many more passages in the New Testament that could be cited.

By now it should be understood that the "prince of the power of the air" is the same as the "god of this world," the "spirit of error" and the "spirit of disobedience." Obviously, this "god"—and spirit—is Satan the devil. Of course, Satan would never actually reveal himself as the devil, or by any of Paul's inspired descriptions of him referenced here. Almost none would follow him if he did.

He has hidden his true identity under the guise of the TRIUNE GOD.

This very different spirit drives the thinking of all modern theology. Under the "power" of this spirit—and Paul shows that this god does have REAL POWER—theologians have devised the concept of the trinity. These have cast off the commandments of God, the first four of which would have insulated and protected them—and all humanity—from all false gods and the resultant error—and endless troubles—that come from following them.

Therefore, it is absolutely imperative to the "god of this world" who stands behind the trinity (and the "Jesus" within it) that its adherents not return to commandment-keeping! He must, at all costs, try to prevent people from returning to the only Law that will lead them away from him to the true God! Recognize that this—disobedience!—is the central feature in how Satan's "voice" is identified.

The "Voice of Christ"

Let's further understand. The true Jesus Christ of the Bible taught that His sheep "know His voice" (John 10:4). Later in John, Jesus stated, "Everyone that is of the truth hears My VOICE" (18:37).

The true Christ's sheep know—can discern—the true Christ's voice, and can distinguish it from the "voice of a stranger" which is the voice of "another Jesus." Get this straight! The spirit of the true Christ, who taught the only true gospel, does not direct the "churches" and "works" of those worshipping another Jesus inside the trinity, who, again, is part of another gospel, derived from another spirit, all of which appears with another counterfeit "body of Christ"—the divided, disagreeing, competing confusion that is supposed to be Christianity.

The true Christ's voice is in part directly identified with its emphasis on COMMANDMENT-KEEPING, and this must never be forgotten in light of all that you have come to understand throughout this book!

I have tried to repeat all of this over and over in different ways for emphasis. This is so the reader can see the clear connection between several fundamental elements of true Christianity, in contrast to the counterfeits of each.

Read and reread all that you have seen here until it becomes crystal clear in your mind—until it is impossible to misunderstand what is at stake in which church you attend. Remember, the true Christ is not divided (I Cor. 10:13)—meaning there is only one TRUE Church of God! Until you find that Church—the one, unified Body of Christ—you cannot have contact with the living Christ who heads it—AND ONLY IT!

As Corinth attests, this wrong but subtle teaching about Christ's counterfeit Body is so clever, so seductive, so elusive to those who do not examine it closely, that it has fooled even many of God's people—those of Christ's true Church—down through the ages.

The problem in Corinth was traced to the fact that the brethren there were listening to false ministers. Almost immediately after warning of a false Jesus, gospel and spirit, Paul identified this problem, explaining how they had been fooled: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Cor. 11:13-15).

The Purpose of the Ministry

Before leaving this chapter, we must briefly discuss what the true Church of God looks like, how it began and how it functions. As you read, compare it to the church or churches that you have attended.

Let's begin in Ephesians 4, which describes the Body of Christ and His faithful ministry, and how their role and responsibility is to help keep Christ's Body unified in truth.

The chapter opens with Paul "beseeching" the brethren in Ephesus to "endeavor to keep the UNITY of the Spirit…" (vs. 3) with the reminder that there is only "ONE body, and ONE Spirit" (vs. 4). The purpose of the ministry is introduced in verse 11, where the offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and other teachers are mentioned.

Verse 12 begins to describe their function—what these offices are supposed to do. For several verses, the continual theme is unity within the Body of Christ, and therefore the need to avoid the wrong kinds of doctrine brought by the "sleight of men."

Notice carefully this extensive description of the duty and work of faithful ministers:

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the BODY OF CHRIST: till we all come in the UNITY OF THE FAITH, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ. From whom the WHOLE BODYFITLY JOINED TOGETHER and COMPACTED by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of THE BODY unto the edifying of itself in love" (vs. 12-16).

Consider all the elements in this passage, including the need to "speak the truth," and to do this "in love"—obedience to the commandments. That is the only way that God's people—"the saints"—can be "perfected," as they are "fitly joined together and compacted." Look again at what could only be called "churchianity." There is no room for thousands of differing groups to constitute Christ's Body and to fit this description with all of the rest of what we have read. True Christians are to "grow up" and to hold to the truth in the face of those called "cunning, crafty" deceivers, who are usually easily able to toss unwitting people "to and fro…with every wind of doctrine."

Learning to Defend in Unity

Paul exhorted the Philippian brethren about unity in the faith. In chapter 1, beginning in verse 15, he warned of "some" who would "preach Christ even of envy and strife" and "of contention" (vs. 16), for the purpose of troubling and "adding affliction" to Paul. (These were obviously preaching another Christ—another Jesus—and it was confusing the congregation.) Paul's response was "I am set for the defense of the gospel" (vs. 17), followed by an admonishment to the brethren to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (vs. 27).

These are powerful words for those living in the atmosphere of today's world. Like the Philippians, we are determined to practice what Paul admonished, recognizing that we are to be "in nothing terrified by [our] adversaries" (vs. 28). Take a moment to read the rest of verse 28 to see what is in store for those who were said to preach a "Christ," but who become adversaries of all the faithful who were—and still are!—"striving together for the faith of the gospel."

When the Church Began

Acts 2 records Christ fulfilling His promise to build His Church. This happened when the Holy Spirit was poured out in AD 31 on all those present at Pentecost. It is important to understand exactly from whom the new disciples were to get their teachings—doctrine.

This first glimpse of the Church, after its birth, offers an extraordinary insight into what it was supposed to look like for the next 2,000 years. Consider this well.

Verse 1 records that everything following in the account, including the receiving of God's Spirit, was only possible because "they were all with ONE ACCORD in one place."

Next, notice the very first thing recorded to have happened immediately after 3,000 people were baptized the same day: "And they continued steadfastly in the APOSTLES' DOCTRINE and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (vs. 42).

Two points emerge. People held to—"continued in"—the "apostles' doctrine," not anybody else's. (Also see Ephesians 2:20.) This is a huge statement, completely contradicting trinitarian belief that the Church was only able to learn the nature of the God it served centuries after the apostles had died. One of the greatest teachings of the New Testament is that the highest office in the ministry, that of apostle, is how Christ brings truth into His Church. The brethren in the first century understood this, and that is why they "continued in the APOSTLE'S DOCTRINE"—and they did this "steadfastly."

But there is another critical point that is to be introduced here—God's people also "continued in…fellowship" together. Verse 44 further makes this clear: "And all that believed were together…" This is the only way that the rest of the verse could state that they "had all things common." To do this, they had to be together, walking in one Church—one organization.

Verse 46 firmly ties the knot. Notice: "And they, continuing daily with ONE ACCORD in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and SINGLENESS OF HEART." Once again, all were together, of "one accord" and with "singleness of heart." As God declares, even in the Old Testament, "how good and how pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in UNITY" (Psa. 133:1)!

Addressing Division in Corinth

The Corinthian congregation had nearly every conceivable spiritual problem. By now you understand why. The first, and perhaps greatest, was that they were plagued by division. After nine verses of introduction in his first epistle to them, Paul immediately moves to the difficulty, revealing the only way that the Church of God, wherever it is found, is supposed to function.

Recall again what we have already discussed, but can now better understand because of the context here: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you ALLspeak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10).

In just this one verse, in five separate ways, Paul makes abundantly clear that the Church Christ is leading enjoys complete unity. No honest mind can possibly draw any other conclusion from this passage. Carefully reread the phrases in italics.

Verse 13 begins with the rhetorical question: "Is Christ divided?" The only reason it is not followed with the word "no" or something similar is because the answer is so obvious. Considering what he had just written, Paul knew that the thrust of his question was equivalent to asking, "Is grass green?" or "Is the sky blue?" When people ask rhetorical questions, no one actually responds, because the answer is so obvious. In Amos 3:3, even the question "Can two

walk together, except they be agreed?" is left unanswered for the same reason. (And, in this light, no wonder professing Christianity walks divided in hundreds of disagreeing organizations and groups!)

Only One Body—and What This Means

Remember also that it was in this same letter to the Corinthians that Paul had to write, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (I Cor. 14:33), followed by "Let all things be done decently and in order" (vs. 40). True "decency" and "order" are IMPOSSIBLE if God's Church is divided into many organizations, let alone hundreds or thousands.

How many have been taught about I Corinthians 12, and that it is basically a thirty-one-verse analogy comparing the physical human body—and all of its connected parts (eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, etc.)—to the Body of Christ? Paul's plain meaning is that any part of the body will die if it is severed away—and it is no longer connected to the body.

Next notice Ephesians 1:22-23. This scripture plainly states that (the true) Christ is "the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body." Also notice Colossians 1:18, which repeats the same thing in the opposite order for emphasis—that Christ is the "Head of the body, the Church." These verses prove that Christ's Body and Church are one and the same—and that He Heads both in ONE ORGANIZATION, and both "Church" and "Body" are qualified by the entirety of I Corinthians 12. In other words, Christ's Body reflects the unified integration of the human body, making clear that all parts of it work as ONE within His one Church!

The New Testament presents one other defining statement about the nature of the true Church. That Church is also described as "the Temple of the Holy Spirit." The Corinthians were reminded of this: "Know ye [King James for the plural form of you, meaning the whole Church collectively] not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God…" (I Cor. 6:19). (Also take time to carefully read II Corinthians 6:16-18.)

So then, the true Church—which equals the Body of Christ—is also the New Testament Temple of God. (This is all made plain in my book Where Is the True Church? – and Its Incredible History!)

All of this makes clear the colossal importance of being absolutely sure that one is connected to the true Jesus Christ and to the power of the true Holy Spirit. This means finding and being part of His Body, the place—the organization—where He is the Vine (John 15:1-6). As the Bible teaches, only the branches there are connected to Him!

While you may think that you have heard the whole story, there is more to why Satan chose the trinity as the face of his counterfeit god. Coupled with all that you have learned in this chapter and the previous ones, we are now prepared to open the door to wonderful, exciting knowledge about the real God of Creation and to follow that with His Plan for you.

Who and What Is God?

We have seen many things develop in the course of this book. We have looked at the ancient origins of the trinity doctrine—and its various links with other triune godheads—whether Hindu, Greek, Babylonian or others. We have clarified and demystified numerous statements from trinitarian thinkers—and have shown the fallacy of this teaching. We then dispelled the so-called biblical proof texts of the trinity, both explaining them and pointing to many scriptures that show otherwise. We have shown that the Holy Spirit is not a person—but rather the power by which God works. Finally, we have seen that the "Jesus" of modern Christendom is not the Jesus Christ of the Bible.

Now that you understand what God is not, the question in this chapter's title should be at the forefront of your mind: Who and what is God? Throughout man's history, he has sought the answer to this intriguing question. It has prompted many to deeply research the subject, almost always starting with what men say. Willing to throw aside the biblical evidence we have seen, so many cling to ideas and traditions of men. To them, God is whatever they were taught that He is—or whatever they want Him to be. This need not be the case with you!

In the Beginning…

There are two verses in God's Word that begin with the phrase "In the beginning…"—Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1. Most are unaware of how much can be gleaned from them about the true nature of God.

To set the stage for all that follows, certain review is important.

Genesis 1:1 states, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Again, the Hebrew word for "God" is elohim, a collective noun, like family, team or group. For instance, the word translated "gods" in Exodus 12:12 is elohim. To distinguish Himself from false gods, the true God revealed His name to Israel as YHVH, which means "Eternal." This was to show Israel He is the God that always has been and always will be—unlike the non-existent gods around them.

Also remember Genesis 1:26: "God said, Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness…" The Hebrew words asah and tselem are translated here as "let Us make" and "in Our image" respectively. This is because elohim is plural. More than one Person is being referred to here.

We must ask again, "How many Beings constitute God?"

John 1:1-3 sheds more light on this question: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were

made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." This passage reveals something crucial! The Word was "with" God and "was" God. How is this possible? Remember, God is a collective noun—just like your last name. For instance, if Robert Smith has a son named Paul, it can be said that Paul is with Smith (his father), and that he is Smith (Paul Smith).

Now, who is the Word in John 1? Verse 14 answers: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." Christ is also called "God in the flesh." This, coupled with verse 14, clearly shows that the Word was Christ!

Since John makes clear that the Word created all things, it is obvious that Christ was present at man's Creation. Together, the passages show a family relationship between the Father and Jesus the Son—who are both God, but separate Beings. They thought out and planned the creation of the universe together. Christ brought the plans to fruition (as John 1:3, Ephesians 3:9 and Colossians 1:16 show). Hebrews 2:10 also shows this: "For it became Him [Christ], for whom are all things, and by whom are all things…"

The Bible makes plain that there are currently two Beings in the Godhead—the Father and Jesus Christ.

Designer, Creator and Sustainer

Everything in the vastness of the universe was created by God. As Creator, it could be said that He is in the "business" of creating. He even created those things that cannot be seen.

Notice this all-encompassing statement: "By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist [are held together]" (Col. 1:16-17). The entire universe, including every atom in it, is "held together" by the power of God's Spirit.

God is all-powerful and, therefore, whatever He commands comes to pass. Notice: "…He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Psa. 33:9). Unlike man, if God desires, He can create something in an instant, simply by thought. Again, the power by which He does this is His Holy Spirit. Now read Genesis 1:2: "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The next event to take place was that "…God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Gen. 1:3). God (not His Spirit) spoke, and His Spirit brought it to pass.

Before building something complex, one must first design and plan it, sometimes extensively. Imagine the detailed planning required to build a giant skyscraper—taking months, maybe years. The human body is infinitely more complex than any building. How much more planning then was required to create the universe? Since God has existed for all eternity, He had prior eternity to plan His final product.

Once God created man, He had to sustain him. Countless processes are required for this to happen. Human beings need air, food, water and shelter. So God is not only man's Creator, but also his Designer and Sustainer!

God's Nature and Character

The Bible reveals that God's nature—His character—is absolutely perfect and holy. He is immutable and unchangeable: "I am the LORD, I change not…" (Mal. 3:6). Unlike man, when God states He will do something, He does it. His testimony is true and His promises are sure—in fact,

His Word declares that He cannot lie! He would never deceive, beguile, delude or confuse.

Notice: "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise [Christians] 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 [comfort], who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast" (Heb. 6:16-19). This should give great comfort to those who study God's Word.

God's Way is the GIVE way—outgoing concern—love, helping, sharing, mercy, peace, happiness—in other words, putting others before self. But man practices the GET way—greed, vanity, selfishness and lust. Imagine the chaos—and confusion—if God practiced man's way! Satan—as the "god of this world"—practices this way—and today's world is the result.

Those who practice the get way do not consider the needs of others. If the Father and Christ did this, nothing would ever be accomplished. They live in perfect harmony, peace and cooperation—knowing that without unity of purpose, they could not work together (Amos 3:3). God's way of life is embodied in a marvelous SPIRITUAL LAW. Those who obey it reap great joy in their lives. Those who live counter to this Law—who break it—reap misery.

Who Is Christ?

We saw that there are two Beings in the Godhead. Still, much confusion about Christ abounds—who He is and what He taught. No two denominations agree on His teachings—and there are many differing ideas about Christ's relationship with the Father.

When solving a mystery, one must start by getting the facts. Only when all the facts are known is the truth of a matter easily recognized. But most people (including most professing Christians) do not discern and prove the information they are given. They seem willing to "leave the thinking to the experts," and these are the people who created the mass confusion and disagreement so prevalent among today's churches.

But examining the religious-sounding rhetoric more carefully, and peering directly into God's Word, reveals a clear picture. We will also more thoroughly prove that Christ was the God of the Old Testament.

Several verses disprove the trinitarian notion that in Old Testament times, God manifested Himself as the Father, and in the New Testament era, He manifested Himself as Christ. Recall that ancient Israel "…drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (I Cor. 10:4), proving that Christ was the God of the Old Testament.

Now couple this verse with Christ's own words in Matthew 16:18: "I say also unto you, that you are Peter, and upon this Rock [Christ Himself] I will build My Church." Other of our literature and my books prove that this does not mean that the Church was built on Peter, but rather on Christ, with Peter being likened to a small stone.

Also, examine the following Old Testament passage prophesying Christ's First Coming: "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, Whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, Whom you delight in: behold, He shall come, says the LORD of hosts" (Mal. 3:1). It becomes plain that Christ was prophesying His own coming.

But some other questions remain. In Genesis, there is a reference to Melchizedek, to whom Abram paid tithes (14:18-20). Many have wondered who Melchizedek was.

The book of Hebrews sheds light on who fulfilled this role. Let's read: "This Melchizedek,

King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him" (7:1). Melchizedek had two other titles—King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God.

Paul went into greater detail in verses 2 and 3: "To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abides a priest continually."

Here, Paul is describing one who existed for eternity. This proves that Melchizedek could not have been a human king. In fact, because it describes Him as not having "beginning of days," He also could not have been an angel. Only God has existed for eternity. This leaves only two Beings able to fulfill the role of Melchizedek—God the Father or Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 5 removes any doubt: "So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, You are My Son, today have I begotten You. As He says also in another place, You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec" (vs. 5-6). The Moffatt translation best renders "after the order of Melchizedec" as "with the rank of Melchizedec." Christ held the rank of Melchizedec during the time of Abraham—and, as the God of the Old Testament, is the Being who is referred to as Melchizedec in Genesis.

Hebrews 4:15 offers even more proof: "We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Jesus Christ is the only human being who ever lived a completely sinless life (Rom. 3:23). Christ showed who the Most High God is when He said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).

When one lets the Bible interpret the Bible, the meaning of any subject comes clear. In just a few verses, we have seen that Jesus Christ was both the God of the Old Testament and the One called Melchizedec. It was impossible for this to have been the Father. It required Christ's First Coming to show the true identity of the Father.

The Father Revealed

We read earlier, "He that has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9) and, "No man knows the Son, but the Father; neither knows any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Matt. 11:27).

No human being could have a relationship with the Father if Christ had not revealed Him. One must go through Christ to access the Father.

As High Priest, "He [Christ] entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12). Isaiah 59:2 shows, "…your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you." If Christ had not "tasted death for every man" (Heb. 2:9), none would have an opportunity for salvation. Christ's sacrifice allowed mankind access to the Father and, in turn, the Holy Spirit!

No one can have a relationship with Christ without being first "drawn" by the Father. Notice: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him…Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father" (John 6:44, 65).

In previous chapters, we saw that one person must always take the lead for anything to be accomplished. The Father—as in human families—is the Head, with Christ second. The Father makes the decisions—and Christ puts them into action. This is why the Father draws one to Christ. It is the Father's decision to work with a human being, and then Christ effectively "takes

over" and continues the process. Notice: "Make you perfect in every good work to do His [the Father's] will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever" (Heb. 13:21).

Finally, Jesus said, in John 17:11, "Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are." With only one member of the Godhead, the Christian conversion process could never be complete. The Father and Christ work together "in bringing many sons unto glory" (Heb. 2:10), as the next chapter will make plain.

Was Christ a Stumbling Block?

Not understanding that the one who would be the Messiah would come twice, the Jews of Christ's day rejected His message. They could not accept that the mere son of a carpenter could be the prophesied Messiah (Mark 6:3-4; Matt. 13:55-57; Rom. 9:33; I Pet. 2:7-8). They were seeking a conquering king who would liberate them from Rome. They were looking for a physical deliverer, not a spiritual Savior. Jesus presented a problem for the Jewish religious authorities. They could not see that He had fulfilled many Old Testament prophecies, even though they were responsible for painstakingly copying by hand for centuries the Old Testament scriptures that foretold His First Coming.

Isaiah 8:13-14 contains a prophecy about One referred to as the "LORD of hosts." Notice: "Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel…and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

The New Testament proves that this prophecy is a direct reference to Christ. Notice I Peter 2:6-8: "Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believes on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

Steeped in Orthodox Jewish teachings of the time, it was nearly impossible for the Jews of Christ's time to recognize Him for who He really was. Under the oppression of the Romans, the Jews hoped that the coming Messiah would be like the Judges of the Old Testament era—freeing them from oppression.

Even Christ's disciples did not fully understand His role and purpose, although they had been with Him for three and a half years and had seen Him after His Resurrection: "Lord, will You at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). Certain points were lost on them.

The Jews' solution to the dilemma posed by Christ's First Coming was to simply reject Him, reject His message and conspire to have Him crucified! Even present-day Orthodox Jews refuse to accept Christ as the prophesied Messiah. As Paul showed in Romans 9 through 11, they are as spiritually blind as Christ's contemporaries, who found it inconceivable that God could become a flesh-and-blood man.

But the undeniable truth from the Bible is that Christ is a member of the Godhead, who emptied Himself of His power and rule and offered Himself as the sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Notice Philippians 2:7-8: "[Christ] made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Christ's sacrifice makes possible the forgiveness of sin, access to God the Father and,

ultimately, allows human beings to fulfill their absolutely INCREDIBLE POTENTIAL!

Duality of the Godhead in Old and New Testament

Some have wondered why, if there are two Beings in the Godhead, the Old Testament does not more clearly address the subject. They point to the fact that the Jews of Christ's time believed in only a Unitarian Godhead—this being part of the reason that Jewish leaders of the time were unable to accept Christ and His divinity. They considered His statements of being God in the flesh as blasphemy. But the Old Testament does contain verses that point to the duality of the Godhead. The Jews could have and should have known.

In the book of Daniel, written nearly six centuries before Christ's life on Earth, we read earlier, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days…" (7:13).

This verse speaks of two Beings: one who is the "Son of Man" who came to the second Being—the "Ancient of Days." The "Ancient of Days" in verse 13 can only refer to the One called "the Father" in the New Testament because, of course, the Son of Man who "…before Him" is Christ. This verse speaks of the Return of Christ to Earth to set up the government of God.

Verse 22 makes it even more plain. It can only refer to Christ, as He is the one who will come at the time that "judgment is given to the saints." This cannot possibly be speaking of the Father. Verse 9 refers to Christ, because this is an "Ancient of Days" who "did sit" at a time when other "thrones" were "cast down" (NKJV: "put in place"). This parallels verse 22 almost exactly, with the other thrones being those of the resurrected saints.

Also consider. Isaiah 9:6 calls the One there who is clearly Christ, "the Everlasting Father"—and yet, we know that Christ is not "the Father." This verse obviously refers to the fact that Christ is the "Father of Creation." Verses 6 and 7 could not possibly refer to anyone other than Christ. Since we also know that Christ is Melchisedec (Heb. 7:1-17), and that verse 3 describes Melchisedec as "having neither beginning of days, nor end of life," it is not difficult to understand why He could also be considered "everlasting" in days.

In the parable of the nobleman (Luke 19:12), Christ made reference to the same event that Daniel saw in his vision. In that parable, the nobleman (Christ) went to a far country (heaven) to be given a kingdom and to return. This was a depiction of Christ's death and Resurrection, and His Return in power and glory as the "King of kings" (Rev. 17:14).

We already saw another plain verse in the Psalms, where King David showed the duality of the God Family: "The LORD said to my Lord, Sit You at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool" (Psa. 110:1). Let's be reminded that this verse mentions two different Lords. One ("The LORD") is the Father. The Other ("my Lord") is the One who would later become Jesus Christ.

Referring directly to Christ, Paul in the New Testament quoted this same verse: "To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool?" (Heb. 1:13). Verse 8 shows that the Son was also God: "Unto the Son He says, Your throne, O God, is forever…" Here Christ is directly called "God." We must always let the Bible interpret the Bible.

Although most Bible students have never had this understanding (and many in the first-century Church, among others today, had it, but lost it and fell away), these verses show that both the Old and New Testaments recognize the Father and the Son as two separate Beings!

The Divine Names and Titles of God

Whether pertaining to heroes, patriarchs, or incidental references in passing, biblical names have specific meaning and are given for a purpose. For example, Adam was created from the ground, and his name in Hebrew simply means "red earth." Likewise, Abram's name was changed to Abraham, meaning "a father of many nations." Also, Jacob's name (meaning "supplanter") was changed to Israel (meaning "prevailer with God").

Another account showing the importance of one's name is found in I Samuel 25. The wife of Nabal acknowledged that her husband had lived up to his name. Interceding on his behalf for his thoughtless and merciless acts, she pleaded, "Let not my lord...regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name and folly is with him" (vs. 25). The meaning of Nabal is "fool." The context shows that, by his actions, Nabal fulfilled the meaning of his name.

In these examples, the meanings of the names were emphasized, and this is the case throughout Scripture.

God's Names Have Meaning

More importantly, the many names of God are also filled with meaning. Shortly after the time of the Exodus, the God who thundered the Ten Commandments was known by the name "YHVH," a Hebrew word meaning "Eternal" or "Everliving One." Yet, today, no one knows the exact pronunciation of this name. Some insist that it must only be pronounced as "Yahvah," while others say "Yehweh," and still others say "Yahweh." Since the Hebrew written language did not retain vowels, the exact pronunciation cannot be known. (This is but one reason it is pointless to insist on using certain "versions" of God's spoken name.)

The same Personage who addressed Moses called Himself YHVH in Exodus 6:2: "God spoke unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD:" The capitalized name "LORD" is always used where YHVH appears in the Old Testament. This is the One through whom God the Father created the universe (Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11) and the One who later became Jesus Christ (I Cor. 10:4; John 1:1-4).

Exodus 6:3 reveals more about the names of God: "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty…" The name translated "God Almighty" comes from the Hebrew term El-Shaddai. Note that this was the name God made known unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Yet, at the time of Moses, God began to reveal more. Verse 3 continues, "…but by My name Jehovah was I not known to them." By a casual reading of this verse, one would conclude that "Jehovah" was another—different—revealed name of God. But a closer examination of this word leads to a different conclusion.

The name "Jehovah" in various Bible translations is a mistranslation. The same Hebrew word translated "LORD" in verse 2 is mistakenly translated "Jehovah" in verse 3. Both of these are YHVH and should have been translated "LORD."

As explained in the Jewish Encyclopedia, the term "Jehovah" is said to have been the invention of Pope Leo X's confessor, Peter Galatin. Other Catholic theologians introduced this mistranslation into most Bible transcriptions. Even the Jehovah's Witnesses, in their translation of the Bible, acknowledge, "While inclining to view the pronunciation 'Yahweh' as the more correct way, we have retained the form 'Jehovah' because of the people's familiarity

with it since the 14th century." Clearly, the name Jehovah is not biblical.

Another name of God is revealed in Exodus 3:13-14: "Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers has sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shall you say unto the children of Israel, I AM has sent me unto you."

We saw that "I AM" comes from the Hebrew word Hayah (HYH), which means "to exist." The name "I AM THAT I AM" carries a very profound meaning somewhat beyond the English terms used to express it. It conveys the meaning of the "Self-Existent One," or the "God Who Is."

The name I AM THAT I AM only has meaning in the language that one understands. The true God appeared to Moses and instructed him that He was, in effect, "the God who is," as opposed to "the many gods who are not."

A New Testament example of "I AM" is found in John 8:58: "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM." Here, the term "I AM" means the very same thing as the term used in Exodus 3:14. Both mean "to exist" and refer to the Self-Existent One. Certainly, Christ existed before Abraham, since He was the One who created all things (Eph. 3:9).

Thirty-one times in the first chapter of Genesis, the word "God" comes from the Hebrew word Elohim. It means "mighty ones." The singular term for Elohim is El, which means "a mighty one," and is also translated "God." When used with certain other Hebrew words, the term El prefixes a variety of names for God.

Notice these other names of God, each emphasizing different attributes of His nature and character:

- Yahweh-Yireh—the Eternal will provide (Gen. 22:14)
- Yahweh-Ropheka—the God who heals you (Ex. 15:26)
- Yahweh-Nissi—the Eternal God my banner (Ex. 17:15)
- Yahweh-Mekaddishkem—the God who sanctifies you (Ex. 31:13)
- Yahweh-Shalom—the God of, or who sends, peace (Jud. 6:24)
- Yahweh-Sabbaoth—the Lord of hosts (I Sam. 1:3)
- Yahweh-Tsidkenu—the Eternal God our righteousness (Jer. 23:6)
- Yahweh-Shammah—the Eternal is there (Ezek. 48:35)
- Yahweh-Elyon—the Eternal God most high (Psa. 7:17)
- Yahweh-Roi—the Lord my Shepherd (Psa. 23:1)

Now you understand why it is such a terrible offense to break the Third Commandment: "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain" (Ex. 20:7). While it is impossible to know the exact way that God's names were pronounced in Hebrew during Old Testament times, studying them helps one learn about God's nature, and leaves him able to more fully worship God.

Glorify God's Name

Matthew 10:33 shows the importance of not denying the name of Jesus Christ in word or action: "But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven."

Since those whom God calls must worship Him in spirit and in truth, they must not be at a

loss to call upon His name: "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psa. 29:2).

God is presently known only by those He has called out of this world. But, in the world to come, God's name will be called upon by all humanity: "All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord; and shall glorify Your name" (Psa. 86:9)!

What Does God Look Like?

It should now be clear who the God Beings are. But some may wonder if we can know what these Personages actually look like. Men have concocted every conceivable thought, idea and theory about the form and shape of God. Trinitarians believe that it is not possible for physical man to comprehend what the spiritual Creator of the universe looks like.

Notice the following examples of how the world sees God: "It says in the Bible that we were made in His image but it's hard to imagine this big man in the sky, as it were. Does He really sit on a throne? Does He have a beard? If He's omnipresent and omniscient then how can He be confined to a finite area, i.e., a body, an image? The infinite defies the finite, and our earthly perception really limits what we can comprehend. If we were in a room with Him, He probably wouldn't extend a hand and say 'how do you do' like another person. A direct encounter would be nothing like what we might imagine it would be. It might be like finding ourselves inside the sun, or the center of a hurricane or some other overwhelming natural force" (www.worldcommunity.com).

Amazing! In the first sentence, the author acknowledges the biblical teaching on the subject of what God looks like. However, in the same sentence, he basically rejects what the Bible says. The writer accepts the biblical teaching that God is omniscient and omnipresent, but rejects what God's Word reveals about God's form and shape. It is astonishing that approximately two billion professing Christians simply DO NOT BELIEVE THE BIBLE on this matter!

Another writer views the subject this way: "When the writers in the Bible talk about God, they speak in metaphors. The experience of knowing God is inexplicable in normal human terms—we don't have the language for it—so they speak of fire and light, of huge thrones and God's robe filling a gargantuan sanctuary. Mysterious creatures like the seraphim surround God. It's like nothing you've ever seen. There are intimate metaphors as well, God as a father or mother, God as shepherd. But there is no one single picture that can contain who God is. They are just glimpses. Hints. Clues" (www.morningstarchurch.org, emphasis ours).

It is true that the Bible uses symbols, anecdotes, metaphors and parables. Yet Scripture also makes many literal statements. The book of Revelation is filled with metaphors and symbols of events that will take place in the near future. But God always explains what the metaphors mean. He does not leave His servants in the dark about them—or leave them open to human interpretation.

For example, Revelation 17:1 describes a "great whore that sits upon many waters." Throughout the rest of the chapter, God reveals who and what the great whore is, and, in verse 15, He reveals the meaning of the "waters." This is the pattern throughout the Bible.

We may ask: Would it make sense for God to hide His form and shape in a metaphor and then not explain what it means? Why would the great Creator of the universe reveal the meaning of metaphors and parables in every area except who and what He is, including what He looks like? This makes no sense.

When God means something metaphorically, men seem to turn it into a literal statement. But

when He wants something to be taken literally, men invariably turn it into a metaphor. When people turn literal statements by God into metaphors, they are severely damaging the Word of God—and their own understanding. Whether they know it or not, they are changing God's meaning.

How many ever think of it this way?

God admonishes all men who study His Word not to add to or take away from it. He promises severe punishment for those who do (Prov. 30:5-6). Notice this concluding warning just to those who alter the book of Revelation: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18-19).

This is a serious matter—and trinitarians should consider it well. To change the meaning of what God states violates this instruction. None should want to be guilty of such an offense. We repeat yet again: Always permit the Bible to interpret itself. As we saw the scripture states, "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Psa. 12:6).

The Biblical Teaching

Recall that in the book of Romans, Paul states, "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (1:20).

The Creation account is an all-inclusive and straightforward record of all that God did, leaving no ambiguities or room for doubt.

On the sixth day of Creation, at the end of chapter 1, God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness" (vs. 26). Man was made to look like, was "made after," the God "kind."

Verse 25 reveals that animals were made in a different way and that each was made after "his kind." Notice: "And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creeps upon the earth after his kind…"

Firmly understand! Man is not part of the animal kind. We do not carry the likeness of any "beast of the earth."

Some sources claim that the Hebrew word translated "image" has a completely different meaning than the word translated "likeness." However, a closer study shows something altogether different. The Hebrew word for "image" is tselem and it means: "image, likeness, resemblance, illusion; a representative figure, an idol." The word translated "likeness" is dhemuth and it means "likeness, resemblance, similitude; image, model, pattern, shape." Both words have similar meanings. Therefore, we must conclude that if we look like God, then God looks like us! We will see that God has a head, hair, two ears, a mouth, a nose, two eyes, a torso, two arms, two hands, fingers, two legs and two feet.

The book of Genesis plainly reveals to mankind—including all trinitarians who will honestly reassess their belief—what God looks like. But there are other examples throughout God's Word that tell us more.

Christ Is Proof of God's Form

Since Christ was the God of the Old Testament, if we study Him, we can be absolutely sure of

what God looks like. Is there any proof of what Christ looked like before He became flesh?

Notice the account of Moses asking God to show him what He looks like, and God's answer: "He said, You cannot see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while My glory pass by, that I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by: and I will take away Mine hand, and you shall see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen" (Ex. 33:20-23).

If God is formless—as is often asserted by theologians—why, after Moses asked to see exactly what God looks like, did God speak of a face, back and hands? Because God does have a form and shape.

Before being crucified, Jesus Christ prayed to the Father and asked that He restore Him to the glorified condition that He had before He became a human being (John 17:5).

But what does that glorified spirit body look like?

Notice what John records in Revelation 1:13-16: "In the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man [Christ], clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters…and His countenance was as the sun shines in his strength."

John was able to see in vision what Moses saw in person! The only difference is that in vision, John was able to see the face of the Eternal. It is obvious John knew that what he was seeing was a glorified Christ. In his first epistle, John states that when Christ returns, "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (I John 3:2).

Numerous other verses describe God as having body parts. Read each of the following passages: Exodus 15:8, 33:11; Deuteronomy 11:12, 34:10; Job 11:5; Isaiah 30:27-28, 59:1-2; Ezekiel 1:27; Hebrews 1:3.

Other Questions

Some may ask, "If we share all of God's features, does He have a physical body made of flesh and bone?" John 4:24 has the answer: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." God made man out of the dust of the ground, but He Himself was not created. We have seen that He is eternal, "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life" (Heb. 7:3).

When Christ came to Earth, He gave up His glorified spiritual body to become a flesh-and-blood human being (John 1:14). However, until that time, God was not flesh. Notice how Jesus Christ describes spirit beings: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit…The wind blows where it [wills], and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:6, 8).

Others may ask, "What shape and form does the Father have?" Notice what Christ said to His disciples when one of them asked Him this same question: "Jesus said unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? He that has seen Me has seen the Father; and how say you then, Show us the Father?" (John 14:9). Christ looked like the Father in CHARACTER, as well as in form and shape. Once again, the Bible has interpreted the Bible!

God Must Be Worshipped His Way

Now that you understand who and what God is, you must also learn how He is to be worshipped. Some say this is unimportant. However, what men say is irrelevant—what matters is God's Word.

Notice: "But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9). It is possible for one's worship of God to be completely in vain—futile. God does not accept those who worship Him as they choose. He must be worshipped precisely as He instructs.

Notice God's specific warning to Israel—and why He warned them as He did: "When the LORD your God shall cut off the nations from before you…and you succeed them, and dwell in their land; take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before you; and that you enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? Even so will I do likewise. You shall not do so unto the LORD your God: for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters have they burnt in the fire to their gods" (Deut. 12:29-31).

Many similar verses could be examined to amplify and strengthen God's plain command given here. (See Exodus 34:10-17, 23:28-33; Leviticus 20:22-26; Deuteronomy 20:13-18.) These passages make it absolutely clear that worshipping God any way other than His way is unacceptable to Him. Let's look at this more closely.

Now consider all that you have read in the chapter about "another Jesus," remembering how Israel worshipped Baal and Ashtaroth through syncretism. It was explained that this is mixing worship of the true God with false customs, practices and worship of other gods.

We are now prepared for a fascinating look into exactly how Israel disregarded the instructions above, and convinced themselves that they were worshipping God. Here is what they were doing: "They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from there" (II Kgs. 17:33).

Did you grasp this? Israel "feared" the true God while serving other gods. It is no wonder then that the next verse explicitly declares that they actually "fear not the Lord" (vs. 34).

This is a crucial point for those who wish to escape the seductive trappings of the trinity and seek to worship the true God. It is impossible for people to follow their own traditions, and serve gods of their own choosing—and be true Christians at the same time. Regardless of what people permit, the God of the Bible does not permit this!

You are urged to carefully ponder what you have just learned!

Some suggest that Christ's coming changed everything. Is this true? Let's examine what the New Testament teaches about worshipping God. We already saw that Christ rebuked the Pharisees for observing their own traditions instead of obeying God's commandments. Now notice the fuller context of what we quoted several times earlier, regarding what God requires of those who worship Him: "But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and IN TRUTH: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24). What does this mean?

On this occasion, Christ was explaining to a Samaritan woman that the time had come that those who worship God would do this through the Holy Spirit dwelling within them. We saw people need not come together in a literal, physical temple in order to worship God because their human body was to be the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19).

Also, since the Holy Spirit is called the "Spirit of truth" (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13), those who have it—who are being led by it—will be worshipping God in truth. True Christians strive to follow the truth in every matter. They would never follow the "instructions" of the trinitarian god, whose "Jesus" teaches that salvation is entirely by grace, with no works required. Notice just a few scriptures:

- "And why call you Me, Lord, Lord, and DO NOT the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).
- "You are My friends, if you DO what I command you" (John 15:14).
- "For if any be a hearer of the word, and NOT A DOER, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholds himself, and goes his way, and straightway forgets what manner of man he was. But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a DOER of the work, this man shall be blessed in his DEED" (Jms. 1:23-25).

Those who truly seek to serve the God of the Bible must obey HIM—and HIM ONLY! If they do, the reward will be incredible, and you are now ready to learn what that is.

The God Family

The reader has probably at some time gazed at the sky on a clear night. The natural reaction is to be awestruck by the panorama of seemingly countless stars. King David recorded his response to such an experience: "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; what is man, that You are mindful of him? And the son of man, that You visit him?" (Psa. 8:3-4). This king of Israel realized his utter insignificance in comparison to the vast universe—and the One who created it. David marveled that, despite this great difference, God is "mindful of"—concerned with—mankind.

The true God is not a distant, uninvolved Creator, passively observing His Creation from afar. Cited earlier, the words of former Prime Minister of Britain Sir Winston Churchill also correctly express that God has "a purpose being worked out here below." This chapter will explain the fundamental elements of God's Master Plan—His supreme purpose for humanity—and where you fit in!

This plan is inseparably linked to the truth regarding the nature of God—and represents your potential as one created in God's image. This is a potential that the trinitarian god precludes. It limits God and blocks the minds of men from learning WHY THEY WERE BORN!

What this chapter covers is only a small part of a subject covered in a variety of booklets and even entire books that we offer. We hope that you will be inspired to examine them.

7,000-year Plan

God's Plan with men encompasses 7,000 years. Cut off from God by sin (Isa. 59:1-2), mankind has believed the lies of the god of this world for thousands of years. Yet most know nothing of God allotting 6,000 years—or six millennial days of a "seven-day week"—to man's rule under Satan before the seventh 1,000-year "day." We are very near the end of the "sixth day."

Let's understand! The Bible states, "Beloved, be notIGNORANT of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (II Pet. 3:8; Psa. 90:4). Of course, most are "ignorant" of almost EVERYTHING that the Bible teaches.

But you can know!

Man has been given 6,000 years to try his own ways, governments, philosophies, values, forms of education and religion, including devising his own gods. Under the devil's influence, he has practiced sin and disobedience to God's Law for all this time. He has then tried to treat all of the ill effects this has brought on, instead of the cause, which is the breaking of God's commandments. God is allowing humanity to learn hard, bitter lessons. The masses, who have never known the precious truth of God, must learn that their own ways do not work!

Created Incomplete

The Psalmist wrote, "…I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (139:14). But human beings were made incomplete.

Genesis 1 records the account of man's PHYSICAL creation. Adam was created so that he looked like—appeared like—God in physical form and shape. Though physically complete, Adam was spiritually incomplete. A vital spiritual component was missing.

Notice Genesis 2:7: "…God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Man is made of physical matter—flesh. While not composed of Spirit like God, he is fashioned—formed—in the "image and likeness" of God.

Adam was physical. He breathed air, and required food and water. Without any of these, he could not survive.

Though Adam was made in the form and image of God, there was an obvious—and big—difference between him and God. Adam was made of the dust. He was flesh (Gen. 2:7). Since God is a Spirit, He is made—composed—of Spirit.

Two "Adams" Reveals Supreme Purpose

An important parallel exists between Adam and Christ. It offers another clue to God's purpose. Scripture makes the comparison this way: "So it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [Christ] was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward [at the Resurrection] that which is spiritual. The first man [Adam] is of the earth, earthy: the second man [Christ] is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also [by the Resurrection] that are heavenly. And as we [converted, Spirit-led people] have borne the image of the earthy [flesh], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [be later composed of spirit]" (I Cor. 15:45-49).

This verse begins with a reference to Genesis 2:7. Notice the phrase there "so it is written…" This is New Testament verification of the Genesis account! The apostle Paul knew that Adam "was made" by God, that this did happen. He believed and understood the Old Testament account.

The goal of a Christian is to receive a Spirit body at the Resurrection—to "bear the image of the heavenly." Just as God created animals—elephants, dogs, cats, horses, etc.—to reproduce after their kind, He created man after the God kind!

Created to Obtain Knowledge

God gave Adam and Eve "dominion" over the earth (Gen. 1:26). This meant that man would be able to learn and produce—to generate—much knowledge as he subjugated the planet.

God designed human beings with minds that could create, devise, reason, observe and experiment. Through this inherent ability to reason, physical knowledge could be processed. This was good and right, as long as it was used within the framework that God intended.

All knowledge falls into two categories: (1) the physical knowledge of how to work with matter and physical things, and (2) the spiritual knowledge necessary for people to develop personal relationships with both God and their fellow man. All knowledge is either physical or spiritual.

Adam and Eve's problem was in reasoning that every kind of knowledge necessary for salvation could be obtained on their own, through experimentation. Once they deviated from

God's intended WAY, they had no hope of reaching the destination He purposed for them—and neither does mankind, which followed their choice. Once Adam and Eve accepted the wrong premise as their STARTING POINT—that they could reason everything out themselves—they were destined to fail!

The accumulation of vast amounts of knowledge over millennia has not changed—and could never change—the fact that mankind is headed for the wrong destination. Curiously, in its quest for ever more knowledge, but with the trinity as its chosen god, so many conclude that they must go through life devoid of the MOST IMPORTANT knowledge—that about God!

Revealed Knowledge

Every sophisticated or technical device or product comes with an instruction manual. Without this, the owner would find the object useless. He would not know how to properly operate it. Nor could he repair or maintain it.

God gave an Instruction Manual—the Holy Bible—that contains vital—essential—REVEALED knowledge, otherwise unattainable. Unlike the modern system of education, it teaches how to live, not just how to earn a living. It explains history, prophecy, important knowledge of doctrine and thousands of other points and principles that govern every aspect of life.

Now understand. The Bible was never intended to contain ALL knowledge, just that which is necessary for salvation—knowledge that man could not discover through human reason, experimentation, analysis and observation. The Bible was not intended to teach mankind how to design marvels of engineering, telescopes that can probe the outer reaches of the universe or computers that can perform trillions of calculations per second.

Men were given the capacity to reason out and design these and many other highly complex, technical inventions. Education in physical knowledge is important.

Here is why. Most of Earth's population live in abject poverty, disease, filth, squalor and illiteracy. They lack the most fundamental education that the developed "have" nations enjoy. Basic education can lead to physical improvements and advancements for civilization.

But 6,000 years of misery, unhappiness and every conceivable evil, ill and woe that humanity has suffered ought to tell the world that it should carefully heed the Instruction Book of revealed spiritual knowledge it has ignored. Yet man continues to reject God's SPIRITUAL REVELATION.

However, cut off from the right channel and path of spiritually understood cause and effect, as well as from God's revealed Law, man still possesses the power of physical, human reasoning. Sadly, this has led to weapons of mass destruction and terror, cruelty, slavery, repression, pollution, crime, religious confusion—including a host of invented gods—and so much more.

Hence, man's misery and woes compound and mount at every turn—and all the religions of this world, with their vast array of false gods, have been unable to solve even mankind's most basic problems.

But remember, God's process of SPIRITUAL CREATION is still in progress. It is not complete! Only the few have been shown the purpose for human life—why human existence.

Product of God's Workmanship

Let's continue examining the bigger picture of God's PURPOSE.

Many wonder about God's overall Plan and whether there is a purpose for human life beyond the present physical realm. Job asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (14:14).

God inspired him to answer his own question: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. You shall call, and I will answer You: You will have a desire to the work of Your hands" (vs. 14-15).

Job recognized that he was the "WORK of God's hands." He knew God "desired" a certain purpose that involved a process at work within him. He understood that one day God would "call" him from the grave, and that he would "answer," thus fulfilling his purpose.

This is crucial knowledge, revealed by God. Job could not otherwise have known it.

God is at work in those He calls. He is fashioning, molding, and building within them His very character. Isaiah recorded, "O LORD, You are our Father; we are the CLAY, and You our POTTER; and we all are the WORK OF YOUR HAND" (64:8).

So many fight God's purpose, thinking they know better than Almighty God who made them. They refuse to be told what to do and to be clay in God's hands. This was Adam's problem.

Isaiah also wrote, "Woe unto him that strives with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to Him that fashions it, What make You? Or Your WORK, He [God] has no hands?" (45:9).

Most people have absolutely no idea that God actively works within those He has called—or what He is doing when He does. Again, this is spiritually revealed knowledge, unattainable to all whom God has not called to understand His truth (John 6:44, 65; 17:17). Although Israel had some knowledge of God's true purpose, she worshipped other gods. This is what swept her away into error, and away from true knowledge.

The true Christian increases in understanding and "grow[s] in grace, and knowledge" (II Pet. 3:18). He endures a lifetime of overcoming, because he is in training for a great purpose. Those called understand that "…he that shall ENDURE unto the end, the same shall be SAVED" (Matt. 24:13).

Paul understood how God works in Christians. He recognized that salvation (Rom. 6:23), and even the faith to receive it, are free gifts. These cannot be earned. But this does not mean God is not actively working (requiring good works) in human beings, as He REPRODUCES HIMSELF.

Consider: "By grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. FOR WE ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP, created in Christ Jesus untoGOOD WORKS, which God has before ordained that we should WALK IN THEM" (Eph. 2:8-10).

We are "God's workmanship"! What could be plainer? God has a Purpose at work within each true Christian!

Paul continued by saying that Christians must "walk" in "good works." The false notion of "just believing in Jesus" thwarts God's Supreme Purpose of fashioning people through careful WORKMANSHIP, like a potter with clay.

Salvation—though of "grace…through faith"—involves good works. This means salvation is a process and not something that happens immediately upon "giving your heart to [the traditional] Jesus."

Notice this about the process at work within true Christians: "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the NEW MAN, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:23-24). II Corinthians 5:17 puts it this way: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature…"

Those whom God is working with are literally a NEW CREATION!

The one who serves God is being transformed in his mind. He yields his own will and seeks

to replace it with God's will in all matters. He seeks to please God—not self!

All of this is lost on those who worship the god who declares that "works"—including commandment-keeping—have no place in Christianity. They are left blind to God's marvelous purpose.

Born to Build Character

Each person whom God calls is presented with the same choice that Adam and Eve faced: yielding to God and His government—or to Satan and his nature.

As little children grow up to look like their physical parents, so do God's children slowly take on the spiritual likeness of their Parent, in holy, righteous character. The Bible describes Christians as "partakers of the DIVINE NATURE" (II Pet. 1:4)—the nature of God. There is the physical nature of creation, human nature and GOD'S NATURE. God is re-fashioning corrupt, carnal human nature into wonderful, glorious, perfect, holy, SPIRITUAL CHARACTER—His DIVINE NATURE!

Character is understanding—knowing—right from wrong and DOING what is right instead of what is wrong! God reveals what is right, but it is through the power of free moral agency, deciding to DO what is right, that righteous character is built.

Character is consciously choosing the right way, against resistance. It is not the easy way. It is swimming against the current, rather than drifting lazily in the direction it is flowing. It is building love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (self-control)—the fruit of the Holy Spirit—plus wisdom, understanding, knowledge, humility and more. This takes time, because character is built through experience.

God now actively works in the minds of only those few who have come to know Him and who have His Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Humans are not born with His character. And God cannot instantly infuse them with it. Character must be developed over a lifetime.

God has perfect character in all respects. He is love (I John 4:8, 16). Love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10; I John 5:3), which requires yielding to God. It is outgoing concern for others, putting them first—ahead of self-interests.

Satan's nature is selfish, incoming and concerned only with what is best for self and how to get more for self. This is the attitude he injected into Adam and Eve when they ate of the forbidden fruit. He wanted them blinded to their awesome potential.

While God made man in the form and shape, physically, of Himself, it does not end there.

You were created to BECOME LIKE GOD—to build perfect, holy, righteous character. Grasp this astonishing truth. God is reproducing Himself in those who have received His Holy Spirit. He is creating children that will look and BE just like Him! To build the very character of God is the reason you exist! But there is more to understand.

Your Awesome Future

The book of Hebrews reveals God's awesome purpose with crystal clarity. The context begins in Chapter 1. Watch as the astounding picture of God's Plan unfolds.

First, understand that God created angels to be "ministering spirits" to assist the "HEIRS of salvation" (vs. 14). This is their role within God's Plan. Angels are not offered membership in the Family of God. This is why Satan (as a fallen angel) so hates the idea that puny, fleshly man can receive what he has never been offered nor can ever achieve.

Paul quotes from two places in the Psalms: "Unto which of the angels said He at any time,

You are My Son, this day have I begotten You? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?" (Heb. 1:5). (Hebrews 2:5 describes the earth under the "subjection of angels" now, but makes clear that these angels will not rule over "the world to come.")

God has never said any of this to an angel!

Paul then quotes another Psalm, explaining what has always been God's Purpose: "Your THRONE, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your KINGDOM …" (1:8). A scepter is a rod or staff used as a symbol of rulership or authority—and in His kingdom it is God who has all power.

Finally, Paul re-frames the same question about angels: "To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be HEIRS of salvation?" (1:13-14).

This sets the stage for what we must understand! Comprehend the awesome future that God has prepared for those who serve Him.

This amazing series of verses continues in chapter 2—and builds in understanding and impact. Paul quotes Psalm 8:4-6. As we saw, David asked the all-important question, "What is man, that You are mindful of him?" (Heb. 2:6). Since God is eternal, and sits over the entire universe and has all power under His control, no wonder David asked, and Paul repeated, this question.

The astounding answer is in the next verse: "You made him [man] a little lower than the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of Your Hands."

Paul further explains that God plans to give immense power and authority to His Sons: "You have put ALL THINGS in subjection under his feet. For in that He put ALL in subjection under him, He left NOTHING that is not put under him. But now we see not yetALL THINGS put under him" (vs. 8). This has not yet happened—but soon will, at the Return of Christ.

When God says that "all things" will be put under the feet of man, this is what He means. The vast universe, with all of its quadrillions of stars and one trillion galaxies, will be put under the authority of men who have been born into the Family of God. In fact, the Moffatt translation renders the Greek word for "all things" as "the universe."

This is staggering knowledge!—wonderful beyond description! Take time to truly grasp it. Savor what can be your future. It is the reason you exist—it explains why you were born!

Next, consider a fascinating verse about another related aspect of salvation that few understand. We have seen that Christians await a truly incredible salvation. But the whole creation is also intensely awaiting the appearing of all those new sons to be added to God's Family.

Carefully read the following, previously referenced but now with different emphasis: "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation [all things in the known universe] was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the CHILDREN OF GOD. We know that the whole creation [everything] has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves [Christians], who have the firstfruits of the Spirit [the FEW now called], groan inwardly as we wait for [birth] as SONS" (Rom. 8:19-23, RSV).

All future "children of God"—SONS—will be liberators of a creation now in bondage. All humanly-devised gods, worshipped today in such ignorance, will be put aside and exposed for what they were—false!

Now we can continue the all-important account in Hebrews 2: "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing MANY SONS UNTO GLORY, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (vs. 9-10).

Grasp these verses. They contain the promise of a staggering future available to mankind. Those called in this age are to inherit "all things" and to be "crowned with glory and honor" through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—"the Captain of their salvation."

These passages reveal the marvelous, wonderful potential planned for all Christians. Paul reveals that, when Christ returns, "MANY SONS" will be brought "unto glory," through the work of the "Captain of our salvation" (Heb. 2:10).

The Bible shows a connection between sons and heirs. An heir has not yet inherited what is to come to him. We read in I Corinthians 15:50 that Christians will "INHERIT the kingdom of God." But those called now, in this lifetime, are HEIRS—begotten (not yet born) sons. Paul further explains, "If you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and HEIRS according to the promise… Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a SON; and if a son, then an HEIR of God through Christ" (Gal. 3:29; 4:7).

God will share rulership over His entire creation with all of His Sons. Christ is merely the first of many. Notice: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the FIRSTBORN among MANY BRETHREN" (Rom. 8:29).

The birth of a "firstborn" son logically implies the future birth of additional sons (and daughters) to the same family!

Of course, one of God's biblical names is "Father" (Greek: Pater: see Matt. 5:48, 6:9; Mark 14:36; Gal. 4:6). This word refers to the head of a family—it is a family name! A human father and son are members of the same family. This is also true of Spirit-begotten children of God!

Continuing in Hebrews 2, notice that Christ "…is not ashamed to call them brethren [the other many sons—true Christians!]" (vs. 11). Truly, the begotten Christian has been called to "glory" and to be one of "many sons." Christ's suffering and sacrifice allow Him to be the "Captain of their salvation"—and potentially yours.

What an incredible future for those whom Jesus Christ "calls…brethren." Notice again: "For both He that sanctifies [Christ] and they who are sanctified [begotten Christians] are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (vs. 11). There will be no difference between Christ and His younger brothers and sisters, except that He will have greater overall authority within God's kingdom. All will be of the God kind—God Beings!

If Christ is "not ashamed to call them [Christians] brethren," then God's begotten sons must not be ashamed to defend the very truth that sanctifies us (John 17:17)—and the truth of the gospel (Phil. 1:17). We must "grow up" unto Christ (Eph. 4:13) and hold to the true doctrines of God. We must QUALIFY to stand beside Christ over "all things."

The Christian goal is to be born into the KINGDOM OF GOD—to become an immortal spirit being who will rule under Christ. What could be more wonderful—more GLORIOUS—to look forward to?

While the trinity is a mystery that cannot be understood, God's Plan, while a mystery to the world, CAN be understood. And His PURPOSE has not changed from the beginning. (My detailed book, The Awesome Potential of Man, is devoted to explaining the truth of the astonishing salvation so few understand.)

The Trinity Doctrine Denies God's Purpose

The trinity portrays God as a closed, indefinable, three-in-one being, rather than a divine Family that can expand—currently consisting of the Father and His Son, Christ.

The religious establishment of the first century rejected the idea that God (Jesus Christ) could empty Himself and become a human being. Christ countered their error with a verse from the Psalms: "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, You are gods [the original Hebrew used the word elohim, the Greek uses theos, meaning "gods"]? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say you of Him, whom the Father has sanctified, and sent into the world, You blaspheme; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (John 10:33-36).

Similarly, professing Christianity—through its convoluted teachings on God's nature—DENIES that man can become God! It declares that any who believe this is possible are guilty of blasphemy. Tragically, those who accept the trinity are kept from understanding that they were created to become literal members of the God Family, and to share in ruling the entire universe!

The trinity is just one of many clever counterfeits devised by the devil to deceive humanity. This world's god does not want human beings to know they are offered what he can never have. Satan does not want men to know that God is reproducing Himself, expanding His Family in a way that can include them—meaning you! Your destiny is membership in this Family, as a born-again Son of God, ruling with Christ at His now imminent Return.

Do not misunderstand, underestimate or miscalculate the importance of which God you serve. Nothing could be more important!

Colossal Decision—Which God?

The world of Christendom is wrought with division, confusion and disagreement. Instead of getting better, instead of churches coming to, or at least toward, agreement and unity, things only grow worse.

Yet none seem to ask: WHY? Why all the fighting, competing and multiplying denominations, sects and cults associated with the world's brand of Christianity?

There is cause and effect in virtually all aspects of life, and this book has touched on this great principle. With all these BADEFFECTS plaguing the world of traditional, orthodox Christianity, why does no one ask the CAUSE? When one includes all the religions outside "Christianity," which encompass over two-thirds of the world's population, the picture is worse—the bad effects even greater.

Remember, the trinity is acknowledged to be a mystery that people are to accept—a god that followers are told they cannot comprehend, and that they should not even attempt to comprehend. Yet blind worship of this god has produced a "Christianity" that is a tangled mess of utter confusion—truly the blind following the blind.

Why does no one ask: Do we have the RIGHT GOD? Could it be that we are not serving the correct God—the TRUE GOD? Why are people not pursuing their ministers and demanding answers? Why do so few seem to care? Why are so few able to, or even interested in, "connecting the dots"?

Jesus taught, "You shall know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7:16), and shortly followed this with "By their fruits you shall know them" (vs. 20). The fruits of what is labeled "Christianity" are deplorable. If we are to believe Jesus, then the "god" behind all of this is exposed as one with AWFUL FRUITS. On the basis of fruits alone, none should want to serve this god!

Yet billions do!

Many of these will oppose this book, even to the point of vehemently attacking it. Your friends will almost surely resist what it contains. This is because truth, when it disagrees with central tenets of accepted Christianity, is relegated to cult status.

Knowledge Brings Responsibility

It has been said that knowledge is of no purpose unless it is used. This book is no exception. You have been given much truth in the most extensive and thorough book you will ever read on the trinity.

Recall how the prophet Hosea summarized Israel's problem then, and that of religionists and supposed "rationalists" of the modern age. This verse presents itself again—this time to you.

Let's reread it, and then examine several other vitally important scriptures:

"My people are destroyed for LACK OF KNOWLEDGE: because you have REJECTED KNOWLEDGE, I will also reject you...seeing you have FORGOTTEN the law of your God, I will also forget your children" (4:6).

What you have learned from God's Word through this book is likely entirely new to you—truly EXTRAORDINARY KNOWLEDGE, completely unknown to you before now. You have received knowledge that only a relative few have understood throughout history. Your mind has been opened to understand precious information. With such a privilege comes responsibility.

Consider for a moment all that you now know: the trinity is not found in the Bible; the origin and history of the doctrine; the convoluted logic of trinitarian thinking; who is behind the triune god; what is the Holy Spirit; the danger of following another Jesus; in what fashion God is one; God will not accept syncretism (mixing the true and the false); how to identify the true Church, Body of Christ and Temple of the Lord; how the three-in-one godhead conceals the true Plan of God; proof that God is a Family, currently composed of two Beings; your marvelous potential within that Family—and much, much more!

You no longer "lack knowledge," but are now left with the question of whether you will accept or, like Israel, REJECT this knowledge. Christ stated, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much REQUIRED" (Luke 12:48).

With knowledge comes responsibility. It usually means that CHOICES must be made as a result of receiving it.

Which God?

God REQUIRED Israel to make a decision with knowledge He had given them. Moses, just before he died, and before giving the reins of leadership over to Joshua, spoke to all Israel on God's behalf: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore CHOOSE life, that both you and your seed may live: that you may love the LORD your God, and that you may obey His voice…" (Deut. 30:19-20).

A generation later, before Joshua died, he also spoke to all of Israel, assembled before him: "Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve Him in SINCERITY and in TRUTH: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve you the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, CHOOSE you this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell: but as for me and my house, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD" (Josh. 24:14-15).

We saw how the prophet Elijah presented a stark choice to Israel, shortly before putting to death in the people's presence the 450 prophets of Baal. Let's read the passage one more time: "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt you between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (I Kgs. 18:21).

Also, in the New Testament, Christ declared, "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other" (Luke 16:13).

Now Decide!

The decision facing you is the same one Israel faced time and again, and that millions before you have faced since Christ built His Church.

God tells you that He does not accept indecision—that you cannot serve two masters—that you cannot halt between two opinions as Israel did. God does not permit you to "answer Him not a word." To make no choice is to make the WRONG CHOICE! One must decide whether he will implement knowledge—he must decide which master he will serve—and he must decide WHICH GOD HE WILL SERVE!

We saw in the book of Acts that Luke recorded this after describing Paul's reference to the "unknown god" on Mars' Hill: "And the times of this IGNORANCE God winked at; but now COMMANDS all men everywhere to repent" (17:30). Ignorance is the state of being without knowledge. Once knowledge is given—and received—ignorance is no longer an excuse. God commands the one who has received knowledge to decide what he will do. This starts with the decision to serve "no other gods" in place of the true God!

This towering question looms: What will you DO with this knowledge? Will you disregard it—reject it? Will you think about it at some more "convenient time"—and merely move on with your life? Or will you act on—put to use—what you have learned and go on to serve the true God—and fulfill your INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL?

The perfect, brilliant, all-powerful and all-wise, eternal God who made the heavens and the earth—and you!—awaits your decision…