



THE GOD
YOU CAN
KNOW!

Global Church of God

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THE GOD YOU CAN KNOW!

by Raymond F. McNair

Chapter 1: *Is God's Nature Really That Important?*

Could anything possibly be as important as coming to know the true God? This is the most vital knowledge any human can ever receive! Yet, very few of the five-and-one-half billion people on this earth have a clear concept of what the Creator-Ruler of the universe is really like.

What is your concept of God? Do you have a definite, focused idea of the true God's nature? Or, do you have a hazy, vague idea of the Great God who created and who actively rules this universe?

God is CREATOR and RULER of Everything!

Most people believe in a "First Cause" which brought the universe into existence. God is identified in the Bible as that "First Cause." He is Creator of the "heavens and the earth," all that exists, both spiritual and physical: "In the beginning God [Heb. *Elohim*] created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). The end of the Bible also confirms that God is the Creator, the Supreme Being who "created all things" (Rev. 4:11). "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible [physical] and invisible [spiritual], whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him" (Col. 1:16).

God does *not* create something, then let it run down. What He creates He also maintains. God is both Creator and Sustainer of all that exists (Heb. 1:2-3)!

God's role as both Creator and Master of all that exists is revealed by Paul: "God, who *made* the world and everything in it, since He is Lord [Master] of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24).

Though belief in God is prevalent in the world, almost no one really knows God in a personal way—nor do they understand what He is truly like.

Do You Worship an Unknown God?

The Athenians of the first century A.D. admitted they didn't know who the true God was. Notice what the Apostle Paul told those Athenians who were worldly wise, yet utterly ignorant of the true knowledge of their Creator: "For as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth..." (Acts 17:23-24).

Paul bluntly told those Athenians that they *ignorantly* worshipped God. Many today, including "professing Christians," are just about as ignorant of their Creator as were the ancient Athenians. These modern theists believe in God, but to them, God is still a vague, far-off, "Unknown God."

Is It Really Possible to Worship God in Vain?

Most Americans and Britons profess a belief in God. Over 90% of Americans still claim to believe in God! But do we really *know* Him, *obey* Him and do His will? Or do we continually thumb our noses at Him, His laws and His ways?

Many have not realized that it is possible to worship God without advantage or effect! Notice what Christ told some religious people of His day, "And in vain they worship Me..." (Mark 7:7). Additionally, the Apostle Paul was inspired to write, "They *profess* to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work" (Titus 1:16)!

This same attitude was displayed by the people of Israel in Old Testament times. The Prophet Ezekiel wrote, "So they [the people of Israel] come to You as

people do, they sit before You as My people, and they hear Your words, but they do not do them; for with their mouth they *show much love*, but their hearts pursue their own gain.... For they hear Your words, but they do not do them” (Ezek. 33:31-32)!

The Prophet Isaiah also spoke of this same problem of paying mere lip-service to God and His Word: “This is a *rebellious* people...children who will not hear the law of the LORD...who say...‘Do not prophesy to us right things; speak to us *smooth things*, prophesy *deceits*” (Is. 30:9-10).

Paul sternly warned God’s people, “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**” (2 Tim. 4:3-4 KJV). Are you willing to listen to deceits—*lies* regarding God?

But It’s Not a Point of Salvation, Is It?

Many in the professing Christian world believe that all we need to do is concentrate on our own spiritual growth and well-being. They don’t see the need to be concerned about the nature of God. These people have two arguments: (1) It’s not a point of salvation; (2) We can’t *really* know anything about God’s nature so it is arrogant to think we can. Both of these assumptions are remarkably shortsighted.

A key to understanding the unsoundness of these two arguments can be found in Jesus Christ’s encounter at the well with a Samaritan woman. The Samaritans were a people who dwelt in Samaria, the region just north of Judea. Originally, this area had been inhabited by the northern Ten Tribes of Israel. However, as 2 Kings 17 attests, in the eighth century B.C. the Assyrians carried the Israelites away and replaced them with a mixed group of people from other parts of their empire. These Samaritans were pagans who mixed many aspects of the Bible’s religion as practiced by the Jews with their heathenish religion.

“The woman said to Him.... ‘Our fathers worshipped on [Mt. Gerizim], and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. **You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews** [cf. 2 Tim. 3:15]. But the hour is coming, and now is, when **the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth**; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and

those who worship Him must worship him in Spirit and truth” (John 4:19-24).

To “know what we worship” is integrally tied to “salvation.” So it really DOES matter a great deal whether we think that God is a Trinity, a single Being, a Family, or some mysterious, ethereal force or essence. In fact, God plainly states here that if we are not worshipping Him in truth then we are not really worshipping Him at all! To truly worship God requires knowing the TRUTH about “what we worship.” It really is that important.

What your particular church teaches YOU about God’s nature impacts how YOU relate to Him. This subject is of VITAL IMPORTANCE to *your* salvation! Jesus said so!

The Apostle Peter explained that God’s “divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, **through the knowledge of Him** who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Pet. 1:3-4). God expects us to know Him.

Can We Really Know God?

Is it true that the knowledge of God the Father, Jesus Christ and Their Holy Spirit is so deep that it is virtually impossible for ordinary humans to understand it? *Absolutely not!* God’s Word clearly reveals much information on the nature and purpose of God.

It is a lie to say we cannot know anything about God’s nature. He wrote the evidence into the fabric of creation. The Apostle Paul wrote, “**For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead [margin: “divine nature,” or, the nature of God] so that they [humanity] are without excuse**” (Rom. 1:20). King David put it this way: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork” (Ps. 19:1). Truly, God’s marvelous creation reveals much about the nature and greatness of the Creator.

God has also given us understanding through His Holy Spirit which inspired the Holy Bible. There are those who teach that the Bible is mostly symbolic and rarely means what it says. These liberal theologians loudly say that if YOU believe YOU can understand what God means in His Bible, then you are being arrogant. **Yet, if God reveals Himself to us in His Word, who does he think he is that assumes God has lied to**

us or that God has not been up front with us? Common sense should lead you to see exactly who is being arrogant!

Think about this logically. Suppose you asked your friend where he works and he told you that he works at home. Would it be arrogant for you to tell someone else that your friend works at home? Would you be arrogant for assuming your friend was speaking literally? Would it be better to assume your friend was speaking figuratively when he said that he worked at home? Maybe your friend does something that he doesn't think you could understand, so he simply used the word "work" because you know that word—even though that is really NOT what he does. Maybe he doesn't really "work" at all; or maybe "home" is not what you understand home to mean. Do you begin to see how unbelievably ridiculous this line of reasoning is?

The truth is **God has not lied to us—God cannot lie!** (Titus 1:2). The God of the Bible is the God YOU can come to know! Of course, we must qualify this by saying that we cannot know *everything* about God. But then, we cannot know everything about anyone, including ourselves! Yet we certainly *can* know what God has revealed to us—through His Word, through His Spirit and through our experience of Him and His creation.

"But as it is written: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God**" (1 Cor. 2:9-10). We must not turn our backs on God's revealed knowledge. Remember what Christ told the Samaritan woman. We must "know what we worship." This is critical to our obtaining salvation. Knowing God IS a "point of salvation"!

Chapter 2: *The Spirit Realm*

God has existed eternally! It boggles the mind to try to comprehend exactly *how* an infinite God could have existed eternally. Can you imagine a time when there was *nothing*? Neither physical matter nor spirit essence? It is infinitely more logical to accept the simple Bible truth that God has always existed than to try to conceive of a time when there was absolutely nothing.

Man can see that the creation demands a Creator—though some even reject this wisdom. But since man is limited to his five physical senses, his knowledge of the Creator is also limited. Without God's Spirit the normal human mind cannot fully grasp God's nature

and plan (1 Cor. 2:5-11).

The famous atheist, Robert G. Ingersoll (1833-1899), a rational, intelligent person from a modern, secular perspective, is a perfect example of what the Bible calls the "carnal mind" (Rom. 8:6-7), which can't possibly fathom *spiritual* matters.

Ingersoll wrote, "If God created the universe, there was a time when He commenced to create. Back of that commencement there must have been an eternity. In that eternity what was this God doing? He certainly did not think. There was nothing to think about. He did not remember. Nothing had ever happened. What did He do? Can you imagine anything more absurd than an infinite intelligence in infinite nothing wasting an eternity" (Robert G. Ingersoll, *Some Mistakes of Moses*, 1892 ed., p. 57).

But, during the endless eons of eternity, God was active as He—and at a later time, His angels with Him—functioned on the *spirit* plane of existence, long before the Genesis creation. It is a serious error to *assume* that the Creator God idled away His time before He created the physical universe billions of years ago!

Learned men have peered into the heavens through the most powerful telescopes, but they have never seen God. Many brilliant men have scoffed at the idea that a Creator could be "out there somewhere." But what they fail to realize is that "God is Spirit" and cannot, therefore, be *seen* either by telescope or microscope. God can't be fully perceived by man's *five senses*!

Unfortunately, *many* have overlooked the fact that God does *not* consist of physical matter. They fail to understand that a spirit world existed long *before* God created the physical world. From eternity the Great God existed in the spirit world. Ingersoll was *mistaken!* "The *fool* has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they have done abominable works" (Ps. 14:1)!

Those who reject the physical creation as proof of the Creator are forever limited to the physical senses and cannot comprehend the spiritual world. It requires faith to see that the Creator has patterned the physical world after the spiritual (Heb. 11:3)!

God is "eternal, immortal, invisible" (1 Tim. 1:17). He is "the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy" (Is. 57:15). The Bible speaks of the Deity's "eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20 KJV). The two members of the Supreme Deity (Father and Son) not only consist of spirit, but both are eternal and unchangeable. "For I am the LORD, I do not change" (Mal. 3:6). Jesus, the second Person of the Godhead, "is the *same* [unchanging] yesterday, today,

and forever” (Heb. 13:8).

God does *not* consist of matter. He is not a physical Being. Rather, “God is Spirit” (John 4:24). The King James version erroneously says, “God is a Spirit,” but most modern translations (RSV, Moffatt, NKJV, NIV) correctly render this verse: “God is Spirit.”

What Is “Spirit”?

Humans, of themselves, do not know anything about spirit or the spirit world. Humans are “physical.” There is no way that human beings, with their *limited* physical means (their *five senses* and their *physical tools*) can in any way detect or evaluate *spirit*. Therefore, spirit or spiritual matters can only be understood by *divine revelation* (1 Cor. 2:14-16).

In the Bible, God reveals many truths regarding the world of spirit or spirit beings. Since “God is Spirit,” and God is *eternal*, therefore spirit is eternal—is not subject to decay and disintegration.

Spirit is not *physical matter*. Rather, it is the divine *essence* or *substance* which has existed inherently in God from the endless eons of eternity. (Note: it is necessary to use words which describe physical things in order to describe or understand spiritual things. Therefore, of necessity, man will always be rather limited when it comes to understanding or expressing spiritual truths.)

Spirit is that non-material essence or substance which permeates both Father and Son, and emanates from Them into the most distant reaches of the universe. Spirit is the divine energy or power which is *inherent* in God, flowing out from Him into every atom of the universe, into every nook and cranny of all that exists—both in the *physical world* and also the *spiritual world*.

Not only does God consist of Spirit (or what many theologians call *spirit essence*), but when the LORD created the first intelligent beings, the angels, He also created them out of His all-pervading Spirit. “And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits (Gk. *pneuma*)...” (Heb. 1:7 KJV). “He makes His angels *winds*...” (NRSV).

When all of the Scriptures are rightly put together (2 Tim. 2:15), the following picture emerges: (1) The Godhead existed from eternity; (2) God consists of “Spirit” or “spirit essence” and is not, therefore, subject to the physical laws of nature—such as gravity, inertia, thermodynamics or magnetism; (3) God created the angels sometime *before* He created the physical universe, including the earth! (4) Spirit-composed God “Beings” (Heb. *Elohim*) exist on a totally different

plane than do human beings.

Was Jesus Christ Created, or Did He Always Exist?

The Father is the greatest spirit Being in existence (John 14:28), but Jesus Christ who is with the Father is also great. What is Christ’s *origin*? Or, did He *always* co-exist with the Father?

The Bible clearly reveals that both of the divine Personages known as Father and Son are eternally self-existent (John 5:26). Neither Father nor Son was created nor in any way came into existence. They have always existed in the eternal spirit world plane of existence. As John 1:1-3 makes clear, **both the Father and the Word (Gk. *Logos*), who became Jesus Christ, were already in existence at the very beginning of the physical creation of the universe.** They have eternally co-existed!

Some teach that Christ is a “created” Being—that He was the “*first* of the creation of God.” But the Bible does *not* teach that! The *King James Version* of the Bible might lead some to believe that Christ was *created* by the Father, but other translations more correctly render the meaning of Revelation 3:14.

The proper rendering of this verse shows that Christ is “the *Beginner* [Originator] of the creation of God.” Christ was *not* the “beginning” of God’s creation but was its “Beginner” or “Originator.” Notice how this is rendered in the following translations: Christ is “...the ORIGIN of God’s creation” (*Moffatt*); He is “...the RULER of God’s creation” (*NIV*).

God’s Word reveals that the Father created all things *by* or *through* Jesus Christ, who is His Chief Executive Officer, “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things...and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by* whom are all things...” (1 Cor. 8:6 KJV).

We are told that the divine “mystery...has been hidden in God [the Father], who created all things *through* Jesus Christ” (Eph. 3:9). The *King James Version* says that God the Father “created all things *by* Jesus Christ” (See also Heb. 1:2).

Both of the divine Personages, later to be known as Father and Son, have existed eternally. They are always in perfect harmony (are always one) in the way They think regarding anything. “I and My Father are ONE,” said Jesus (John 10:30); (cf. John 17:11, 21-23).

Since the Father and Son are always in perfect concord, they must have agreed that the One who was to become the Son would come to this earth and voluntarily offer up Himself as a sin offering for all mankind. For, “although He [Christ] existed in the form of God, [He] did not regard *equality* with God a thing to be

In the beginning was the Word

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:1-3).

The English expression “Word” is from the Greek *logos*. The meaning of this noun in its immediate context has been controversial. Herbert W. Armstrong taught that it means “‘spokesman,’ ‘word,’ or ‘revelatory thought.’ It is the name there used for an individual Personage” (*Mystery of the Ages*, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1985, p. 41). Some argue about Mr. Armstrong’s definition.

Ephesians 3:9 records that God “created all things through Jesus Christ.” This agrees perfectly with the Hebrew Scriptures: “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made.... For He *spoke* and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:6, 9). Who did the actual *speaking*? God the Father is the Creator—but He did the actual work of creating through the Word—the preincarnate Jesus. Christ SPOKE the universe into existence—but only at the Father’s command. “I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things” (John 8:28).

From these Scriptures, it is evident that Christ was certainly God’s “Spokesman” in function. Can *Logos* have this *definition*? The *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* (1992) offers the following meanings: “a word, uttered by a living voice...what someone has said...doctrine, teaching...reason, the mental faculty of thinking.” Some apply a literal definition to *Logos* and claim that our Savior was just an “utterance” or a mere “thought” in the Father’s mind. This is absurd. Was the crucifixion merely a projected thought going through some motions? Can a thought itself think? This is ridiculous.

Should we understand from Christ’s name, “Alpha and the Omega” (Rev. 1:8), that He is really two letters of the Greek alphabet? What about “the Lamb of God” (John 1:36)? Is Christ literally a young sheep? Names in the Bible often have figurative meanings.

Figures of speech follow a certain logic. Paul said of the Corinthian congregation, “You are our EPISTLE written in our hearts...” (2 Cor. 3:2). The church members in Corinth were not a *literal* epistle or written letter. Paul was using abstract language with an underlying concrete meaning. The Corinthians expressed, through their conduct, all that Paul had taught them. Christ did everything the Father commanded and conveyed His Father’s thoughts to humans. He SPOKE on His Father’s behalf. In short, Christ served as the Father’s Word to humanity. Such a job can basically be summed up in a single word: “SPOKESMAN.”

grasped [at], but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:6-8 *NASB*).

There can be no doubt that Christ was born “in the likeness of men” and had a human form—He assumed the “appearance of a man” when He came to live on this earth as the Savior of all humanity!

Truly the *Logos* of the Godhead emptied Himself and came to this earth in lowly human form, at which time He was called “Immanuel,” meaning *God with us* (Matt. 1:23).

Who Was Melchizedek?

Can we *prove* from the Word of God that Christ has existed eternally? Yes, we can! Genesis 14 introduces an intriguing figure who had no beginning point.

After defeating and taking spoils from a group of rulers who had abducted his nephew, Abraham made a point of visiting this mysterious individual: “Then Melchizedek king of Salem [Jerusalem] brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.... And he [Abraham] gave him [Melchizedek] a tithe of all” (Gen. 14:18, 20).

The Apostle Paul wrote, “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated ‘king of righteousness,’ and then also king of Salem, meaning ‘king of peace,’ **without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made [as a manifestation] like the Son of God, remains a priest continually**” (Heb. 7:1-3).

Who was this Melchizedek? He could not have been an angel, for the angels were created by God; therefore, they have had a “beginning of days.” All humans have both a “beginning of days” and an



“end of life.” God only is without a beginning; therefore, Melchizedek has to be either the Father or the Son. Which One was He?

The Scriptures reveal, “No one *has seen* God at any time” (John 1:18). Since many thousands *saw* Christ on numerous occasions, the Scriptures which say that “no one has seen God at any time” must refer to the Father. The Bible reveals that Abraham actually saw and spoke to Melchizedek. So the ancient King of Righteousness could be none other than the divine Spokesman who later *became* Jesus Christ! Notice that he was “LIKE the Son of God.” He was not YET the Son of God until he was specially begotten of the Father in the womb of the virgin Mary. But there can be no mistaking His identity. In addition, Melchizedek’s

continuing function as a priest would not make sense if the Father were being indicated. A priest is a mediator between man and God. Jesus Christ fulfills that role even now (1 Tim. 2:5)—and forever will!

CHAPTER 3: *Is God a Spiritual Family?*

A belief in *one* God is known as monotheism. This belief is shared by Christianity, Islam and Judaism. All of these religions profess to believe in one God! And all branches of the Church of God firmly believe there is just one God.

But in what way has the “mainstream Christian” concept of the one God differed from the teaching of the Bible and the Church of God? Traditional Christianity, whether we speak of Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy or Protestantism, believes in just one God, though

nearly all of those churches believe God is a *Trinity*—which Webster’s dictionary defines as follows: “TRINITY...the *unity* of Father, Son and Holy Spirit as three persons in one Godhead according to Christian dogma” (*Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed.).

Historically, the commandment-keeping Church of God did *not* accept the Trinity as being biblically based. Rather, it looked upon this belief as being of *pagan*, unscriptural origin. Today, however, anyone who does *not* believe in the Trinity is looked upon as a heretic by the majority of professing Christians. The Trinity is the central doctrine of hundreds of denominations and sects—**even though it is, by their own admission, totally incomprehensible.** “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” (H. Lindsell and C. J. Woodbridge, *A Handbook of Christian Truth*, pp. 51-52). Yet, surprisingly to some, the Bible nowhere even mentions the word “Trinity” in any *bona fide* translation.

Is God one? If so, HOW is He one? Is He merely a force, some kind of all-pervading soul, an ethereal essence, that has no definite form or shape? Is God a Trinity? Or, is God one Family of Beings, who are one in mind and spirit, and desire that you and I share with the Father and His Son those same God-like characteristics for eternity?

Christ Came to Reveal the Father

Are Christ and the Father “Persons,” which are *distinct* from each other, or are they merely two personalities of one God who assume many personalities—like an actor who portrays different *character* roles on film or stage? Historically, the Church of God has believed that the Father and Son, together, presently make up the *two Persons* of the Godhead.

Although several Old Testament (OT) Scriptures pointed to more than one “Person” within the Hebrew God, the average Israelite undoubtedly thought of the Hebrew God as being only *one* Being, Person or Entity. “Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one” (Deut. 6:4). This verse, known as the “Shema” became the Hebrew’s creed to distinguish them from the competing polytheistic beliefs of a universe filled with scheming, fighting and romancing gods of the pagan world. The “chosen people” who lived in the time of Christ and His disciples *failed to understand* that the word “God” (Heb. *Elohim*, Gk. *Theos*) **could include two divine Beings!**

Why did Jesus Christ need to make known the Father? Simply because the Father had *not* previously been clearly expounded to humanity!

Notice John 1:1: “In the beginning [of the physical creation] was the Word [Gk. *Logos*], and the Word was with God [the Father], and the Word was God.” Very definitely, both Father and Son had existed before the beginning of the physical universe. The *Logos* (later to become Jesus Christ) was also “God,” that is, He was the *second member* of the Godhead. He was the Father’s Word or “Spokesman,” always carrying out the will of His Father.

Jesus revealed to His disciples His eternal, pre-human existence with the Father in glory, **“For You loved Me before the foundation of the world.** O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have

known You; and these have known that You sent Me. **And I have declared [revealed] to them Your name [“Father”], and will declare it”** (John 17:24-26).

Clearly, Jesus (the *Logos*) had existed with His Father in eternal glory *before* He was born as a flesh-and-blood human. “And the Word [Spokesman] *became* 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). Jesus Christ had a human mother, Mary, but a divine Father. His Father was God, so Jesus is referred to as God’s only begotten Son ten times in the New Testament.

The Apostle John said, “*No one* has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, **He has declared Him”** (v. 18)!

The Greek word here translated into English as “declare” is: “...*exegeomai*...[and means] to lead out, signifies **to make known, rehearse, declare**. In John 1:18, in the sentence ‘He hath declared Him,’...[means] to unfold in teaching, to declare by making known” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, by W. E. Vine, p. 282).

One of Christ’s main missions was “to make known” exactly who His Father was—though Christ knew it would be difficult!

The Divine Chief Executive Officer

Scripture reveals that the Son is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) *under* the Father, launching into action His Father’s plans. “The Father loves the Son, and has given *all things* into His hand” (John 3:35). Jesus Christ is Co-Creator, Co-Owner and Co-Ruler with the Father over the entire universe! (See Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:15-18; Heb. 1:1-3.)

But even though He is CEO of the universe, Jesus always directed human worship towards the Father: “Believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, *worship* the Father...But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him” (John 4:21, 23). This verse plainly shows that the Father seeks out sincere, pure-hearted believers to worship Him.

Because Jesus said God was His Father, the Jews put two and two together and realized that, in effect, He was saying that *He* was also God! They accused Him of blasphemy: “Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath [according to their added, extra-biblical interpretations], but also **said that God was His Father, making**

Himself equal with God” (John 5:18). Clearly, the Jews realized that *if* God was Jesus’ *Father*, then this meant He was, indeed, the very *Son of God*—and they couldn’t accept that of a human being who was flesh and blood as they were! How about you? Does this “blow your mind”?

Did those Jews who heard Jesus get His message wrong? Not at all! In continuing this teaching Christ said, “For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.... **For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself**” (John 5:21, 26). Only God can say such a thing. Certainly no transitory human life forms can make such a statement. Both Father and Son possess *inherent* life!

Christ Will Judge Mankind

Who is the judge of humanity? Many Christians think the Father will be the Supreme Judge of all. But Jesus said, “The Father *judges no one*, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father” (John 5:22-23). Jesus explained why the Father decided this: “[The Father] has given Him [Jesus] *authority* to execute judgment also, because He is the *Son of Man*” (v. 27).

Since Christ was flesh and blood, and was tempted as we are, having suffered and died, as must every mortal human, He knows from firsthand experience the weakness and suffering of humanity (Heb. 4:14-15). Consequently, the Father has given His Son the responsibility to judge: “**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ**, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10).

As the Father’s CEO, Jesus was never some sort of spiritual “independent contractor” or “free agent.” He always served the Father and followed His orders explicitly: “I can of Myself do nothing....

Exactly What Does the *Shema* Mean?

“**Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!**” This Scripture, known as the *Shema* (pronounced “sh’MAH”), is used to argue in favor of the idea that God is *one* single Being—either the Jewish concept or the Trinitarian “three-persons-in-one being.” In reality, it says no such thing!

In Hebrew, this sentence is composed of six Hebrew words: “***Shema Yisrael, YHWH Elohaynu, YHWH echad.***” *Shema* is the Hebrew command, or imperative, form of the verb “to listen” or “to hear.” In the modern vernacular, it conveys the meaning of “Now hear this!” or “Listen up!” *Yisrael* means “Israel.” *YHWH* is a PERSONAL name of God (see p. 14), meaning “the Eternal.” The Jews, thinking this word was too holy to pronounce, would replace it with *Adonai* (Heb. “Lord”) when speaking. It is rendered “LORD” in many English translations. *Elohaynu* is the Semitic noun *Elohim* (Heb. “God”) in its first person, plural possessive form and, as such, means “our God.”

The last word to explain here is *echad*. *Echad* is a common word. It denotes a singularity usually translated as “one.” But it can have other similar meanings such as: “only” (Old English form of “one-ly”) or “alone” (“all one”). Notice this verse: “King David said to all the assembly: ‘My son Solomon, whom **alone** God has chosen’” (1 Chron. 29:1 NRSV). The word “alone” in this verse—as translated in the NKJV, NRSV and KJV—is translated from *echad*. Isaiah 51:2 says, “Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah *who* bore you; for I called him **alone**, and blessed him and increased him.” Both the KJV and NKJV translate *echad* here as “alone,” but the NRSV uses the word “one.”

So which translation best fits the context of the *Shema*? It could be read as, “**Hear, Israel, the Eternal our God, the Eternal alone**”—or, in other words, “Listen to the Eternal only.” But the Greek Scriptures support the presence of the verb “is” in this sentence, which is not explicit in the Hebrew text. Forms of the verb “to be”—such as “is”—are often left out of the Hebrew as “understood.” Consequently, the NRSV renders Deuteronomy 6:4 most true according to the context: “**Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.**” **This view is also supported by William L. Holladay’s *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 9, which renders “*YHWH echad*” as “*YHWH alone*.”** This also makes sense since YHWH is a personal name. Try substituting *your* personal name in place of “the LORD” and see which translation of *echad*—“one” or “alone”—makes more sense grammatically.

Was Moses making a theological point about the nature of God when he wrote the *Shema*, or did he have something else in mind? The preceding chapter, Deuteronomy 5, recounts the giving of the Ten Commandments to Israel at Mt. Sinai. Then the Israelites told Moses, “Tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do it” (v. 27).

God heard the people’s reply and was pleased with it as far as it went. But the Eternal realized that the people had a

problem: “If only they had such a mind as this, to fear Me, and to keep all My commandments” (v. 29 NRSV). So, just before the *Shema*, God reiterated the absolute necessity of the people to heed what He commanded for their own good. Almost immediately *after* the *Shema*, Moses urged the people not to pay attention to false gods.

It is a mistake to assume the *Shema* stands alone. That would be similar to thinking that the first of the Ten Commandments says, “I *am* the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Deut. 5:6). That is only the preamble to the commandment. Verse 7 must be included also: “You shall have no other gods before Me.” Verse 6 clearly explains the obligation of verse 7. Because of who God is and what He has done for Israel, the Israelites must have no other gods before Him—He alone is their God!

It is the same with the *Shema*. The next verse stands with it: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might” (Deut. 6:4-5 NRSV). Verse 4 begins with a command to listen and then explains the obligation of verse 5.

In Mark 12, Jesus Christ was asked by a scribe, “Which commandment is the first of all?” (v. 28 NRSV). Jesus answered, “The first is, Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength” (vv. 29-30 NRSV). Though Christ probably quoted this verse in Hebrew, the Holy Spirit inspired Mark in translating it into Greek. The Greek word translated “one” here, *heis*, can also be rendered as “only” or “alone”—just as in Hebrew. Confirmation that the word “is” should be understood in Deuteronomy 6:4 lies in the fact that the Greek *estin* (“is”) occurs in the inspired NT quote of that OT verse.

The best way to render Mark 12:29 would be the same as the NRSV renders Deuteronomy 6:4. Proof of this lies in the scribe’s answer to Jesus: “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that he is one [alone], and **besides him there is no other**’ [which certainly means “alone” and not just “one”!]; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength” (v. 12:32-33). **Because the Eternal alone is God, we must love and obey Him above all else. That is the point of the *Shema*!**

Moses was not making a statement about how many Beings constitute God. The *Shema* states that the Eternal is God alone; but that doesn’t mean that God is one single Being! **God IS one! There is only ONE God.** The question is, HOW is God one? Christ made the answer clear in John 17, where He expressed His desire that WE be ONE with the Father and Son *just as* THEY are ONE with each other. Does that mean He wants us to all become ONE BEING? Obviously not.

When we understand that God is a Family and that the personal name, YHWH, can apply to either the Father or the Son, then it becomes clear. God—two Beings at present—is ONE Family. There is NO God outside of the God Family—but God wants US to all become ONE FAMILY with Him! What a marvelous opportunity!

I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me” (John 5:30).

“For the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.... **You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form**” (vv. 36-37).

The Father “Calls” Us to His Way

Many Christians don’t understand that it is actually *the Father* who calls us out of the world, and into His Kingdom: “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.... **No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him** [through His Spirit]; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Therefore everyone who has *heard* and *learned* from the Father comes to Me. Not that anyone has *seen* the Father, except He who is from God; He has *seen* the Father” (John 6:37, 44-46).

Here the word “seen” has the sense of “to understand” or “to see with the mind’s eye,” as Job finally came to perceive God: “But now my eye sees You” (Job 42:5).

Even though it is always the Father who calls people into His Family, Christ said, “I am the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*. No one comes *to* the Father except *through* Me,” and “I am the *door* of the sheep” (John 14:6; 10:7). A real relationship with God the Father is just not possible through other “forms of spirituality”—such as the New Age or the Goddess movements and other non-biblical religions. Obviously, Jesus’ doctrine is extremely unpopular in this age of relativism which says, “That’s your opinion,” and “It doesn’t really matter.” Wrong! *It does* matter to the Father!

When the Jews asked Christ, “‘Where is Your Father?’” Jesus answered, ‘You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you

would have known My Father also” (John 8:19).

Christ then said, “When you lift up [crucify] the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do *nothing* of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him” (vv. 28-29). What total *selfless* dedication!

The Supreme Being of the Universe

Who is the Supreme Being of the entire universe? Christ said, “My Father, who has given them [the disciples] to Me, **is greater than all**; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand” (John 10:29). “If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ **for My Father is greater than I**” (John 14:28)! Clearly, Christ is *not greater than* Himself! This also proves the utter impossibility of Christ and His Father constituting “one Being,” or “one Entity.”

Christ reiterated time and time again that He did *not* speak of *Himself*. Jesus followed the directions of the Father. “For I have not spoken on *My own authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.... Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak” (John 12:49-50). Clearly, a subordinate follows the orders of his superior. Jesus Christ was under *divine orders* from His Father. “Do you not believe that I am *in the Father*, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you **I do not speak on My own authority**; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works” (John 14:10).

The submission of Christ to the Father is additionally shown by noting who is the divine Decision Maker who gives the Holy Spirit, thus making a human a Christian. Shortly before His death, Jesus said to His disciples, “I am going to the Father.... And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate [Gk. *parakletos*], to be with you forever” (vv. 12, 16 NRSV).

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We [plural] will come to him and make Our home with him” (v. 23). “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, [which] **the Father will send** in My name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you” (John 14:26 NRSV). “But when the Helper comes, [which] I shall send to you **from the Father**, the Spirit of truth [which] *proceeds from* the Father, [it] will testify of Me” (John 15:26)!

A Divine “Person” or a “Hypostasis”?

Some misguided modern “theologians” think it wrong to refer to the Father and the Son as “Persons.”

Instead, they think we should refer to the Father and Son by the little-understood Greek word *hypostasis*—a word central to the development of the Trinity doctrine. Webster’s dictionary defines this Greek word as follows: “HYPOSTASIS... **1: something that settles at the bottom of a fluid... 2: person...**”

As the Apostle Paul explained, “So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words *easy to understand*, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air” (1 Cor. 14:9). “Therefore, *if* I do not know the meaning of the language [or word], I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me” (1 Cor. 14:11).

Few English-speaking people today use, in their daily speech, the Greek word *hypostasis*. Therefore we should *not* use that little-known Greek word when referring to the Father or Son. We should rather use an English equivalent such as *person* or *being* which will be easily understood.

The Father is referred to as a Person or a Being in numerous translations of the Bible: “Who [Christ] being the brightness of His [Father’s] glory, and the express image of *His Person...*” (Heb. 1:3 KJV). “He [Christ] is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of GOD’S VERY BEING...” (Heb. 1:3 NRSV). Clearly, the Father is a Spirit *Person* or *Being*, and so is the *Son!*

Only One True God: Plurality in Unity

Clearly, God’s “oneness” is taught throughout the Old and New Testaments. The Apostle Paul said, “There is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith” (Rom. 3:30). Paul also wrote, “We know that an idol is nothing...and that there is no other God but one” (1 Cor. 8:4).

But the Word of God emphatically does *not* say that God is just one Person, one Being, or one Entity.

There are those who erroneously teach that the Father and the Son are merely *different* personalities, modes, or manifestations of God. They believe that the Father and His Son are, *literally*, one Being, one Entity. But, most emphatically, this is not what the Bible teaches!

When on this earth, Christ always spoke of His Father as being in heaven. He said, “I and My Father are ONE” (John 10:30). Jesus stated clearly, “My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28). How can this be? How can Christ and His Father be “one” even though the Father was “greater” than Christ?

The answer to this enigma is simple. The Father and His Son are *one* in spirit, *one* in mind, *one* in Their thinking. They are in complete accord or harmony.

They never disagree in the way they view anything. But this does *not* mean that the Father is the same Person as the Son. It does *not* mean that the “Son” is simply another “Personality” which the “Father” assumes. The Bible teaches that the Father and Son are two separate, distinct Persons (Beings or Entities), yet They are always in total agreement in the way They think.

Notice how the Father and Christ are in *total union* and harmony in the way They think and act: **“I and My Father are ONE”** (John 10:30). But in what way are They “one”? Christ’s last prayer, just before He was crucified, revealed how the Father and His Son are one: “Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be ONE as we are [one]” (John 17:11).

Members of God’s true Church are to be united in the same harmonious thinking which characterizes the perfect relationship now being experienced by the Father and His Son. Christ said, “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 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 sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be ONE just as We are ONE: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in ONE, and that the world may know that you have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (John 17:20-23).

Obviously, the disciples were not all one being, but rather, many different persons. Jesus could only have meant that the disciples were to be “one” by being in complete accord in their thinking—in the same way the Father and His Son are “one.” Paul wrote, “Now I plead with you, brethren...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*” (1 Cor. 1:10).

We are told that God’s Church is one Church, one body, but it has many members—all united in God-like *oneness*. “There is *one* body and *one* Spirit...*one* God and Father of all...” (Eph. 4:4, 6). It would be utterly ridiculous to think that all Christians can become “one” spiritual member. “For as the body is *one* and has *many members*, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all **baptized into one body... For in fact the body is not one member but many**” (1 Cor. 12:12-14).

The oneness which binds the Father, the Son and the disciples is the unity that comes from the presence of the Holy Spirit which proceeds from the Father. As already mentioned, “God is Spirit” (John

4:24), and the indwelling presence of His Spirit brings unity, harmony and oneness.

My Father and Your Father

Shortly before Christ was to die, He prayed to the Father to keep His disciples safe through the Father’s own name: “Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through YOUR NAME those whom You have given Me, that they may be *one* as We are” (John 17:11)! Jesus then said, “O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and *these* [disciples] have known that You sent Me” (v. 25).

One of Jesus’ biggest goals during His human existence was to reveal that godly human beings could not only worship God as their Master and Ruler, but also could enter into **a genuine family relationship with God as their spiritual Father**.

Notice carefully what Jesus Christ said to Mary *after* His crucifixion and resurrection, “Go to My *brethren* and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and *your* Father, and to My God and *your* God” (John 20:17)!

Jesus Christ was sent by the Father to this earth with an important mission! Part of that mission was to “declare” (reveal) to mankind that He was the Son of God, and that **the unique name of that Supreme God was “the FATHER”!** Jesus highly honored His Father while on earth, and taught His followers to pray to Him (Matt. 6:9), to obey Him and honor Him!

Just as Jesus had the goal of preaching the Gospel and revealing the Father, so He now commissions His faithful disciples to do so: “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” (John 20:21)! In a world where so many human beings are lonely, discouraged, lost and alone, what great news it is that **we can enter into a warm, eternally lasting relationship with the Great God of the universe, our heavenly Father!**

“Let Us Make Man in Our Image”!

So what do the Father and Son look like? Despite the fact that God is invisible to the physical eye (Col. 1:15)—unless supernaturally manifested—God still has definite form and shape.

“And GOD [*Elohim*] said, ‘Let US make man **in OUR image** [*Heb. tselem*], **after Our likeness** [*Heb. demuwth*]’” (Gen. 1:26 KJV). God did *not* say: “Let Me make man in My image.” The Hebrew word *Elohim* is a plural noun—denoting a *plurality* of Beings in the God Family.

Some professing Bible scholars simply *refuse* to

believe the plain words of the Scripture. They *assume* that God merely made man in His *mental image*—not in His actual image, likeness or appearance. However, anyone who will check the Hebrew words translated as “image” and “likeness,” as used in Genesis 1:26, can see for himself that both Hebrew words clearly show that Adam was made to look like his Maker. The Moffatt translation says: “Let US make man in OUR own likeness, to *resemble* US.”

To understand what God was talking about in Genesis 1:26, we only need to look a few chapters ahead in Genesis 5:1, 3. “In the day that God created man, He made him in the LIKENESS of God.... And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son **in his own likeness** [*demuwth*], **after his image** [*tselem*], and named him Seth.” There can be no mistaking the meaning here. Adam’s son *resembled* his father. He was in his father’s physical image and likeness just as Adam was in the image and likeness of God—just as WE ALL are!

God’s OT Appearances

Scripture makes it clear that whenever God supernaturally revealed Himself to human eyes, He *always* appeared in man-like form and shape, never *once* appearing in the form of any other creature! Let us note a few of the OT examples where God appeared to various people. The LORD (Heb. *YHWH*) and two angels who appeared to Abraham were called, in the Scriptures, “three *men*” (Gen. 18:2). Jacob wrestled with “a man [Heb. *ish*]” (Gen. 32:24), who was none other than God. “For I have seen God [Heb. *Elohim*] face to face,” said Jacob (v. 30). Moses and other leaders and “seventy of the elders of Israel...saw God [Heb. *Elohim*]” (Ex. 24:9-10). On another occasion, Moses was permitted to see God. “And thou shalt see My *back parts*, but My *face* shall *not* be seen” (Ex. 33:23 KJV)!

The Bible says that Moses’ successor, Joshua, also saw God: “There stood a man [Heb. *ish*]” near Joshua (Josh. 5:13 KJV), and that “man” was none other than the LORD, before whom Joshua immediately fell prostrate on the ground (v. 14), and was commanded to remove his shoes (v. 15) as a sign of respect.

Of course, in these encounters, God never revealed His full, shining glory to these men. The intensity would have been so bright that they would have been killed instantly. As God explained to Moses, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live” (Ex. 33:20). They only saw God in part, but what they saw was a Person—a Being with actual human-like

form and shape!

Even in prophetic visions of God in His GLORY, God still looked like a man! The Prophet Ezekiel, in his visions, saw God sitting upon a glorious throne. “And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne...and upon the likeness of the throne was the **likeness as the appearance of a man** [Heb. *adam*] above upon it” (Ezek. 1:26 KJV). “**This was the appearance of the likeness** [Heb. *demuwth*] **of the glory of the LORD**. And...I fell upon my face” (v. 28 KJV).

God’s NT Appearances

We have examined some OT Scriptures which plainly *prove* that God Almighty *did* make man in His own image. God also planned that mankind was to be fashioned in the “spiritual character image” of his Creator by the process of spiritual conversion resulting in *salvation*. “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be **conformed to the image of His Son, that He [Christ] might be the firstborn among many brethren**” (Rom. 8:29; cf. Heb. 1:3).

The NT Scriptures reveal that the “Second Person” in the Godhead gave up the comfort and glory that He had in heaven and became a mortal human being, coming to this earth as man’s Savior (2 Cor. 8:9). As *Immanuel* (meaning “God with us”), He walked and talked with mortal humans for over 33 years, taking the form or likeness of a man.

Jesus answered His disciple Philip’s request to see the Father, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” (John 14:9). Christ resembled the Father.

After His crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and ate food in front of them (Luke 24:41-43). Later, He was seen by over 500 people—and He still looked like a man. Long after returning to heaven, He revealed the glory of His appearance to His closest apostle, John, in vision. This vision, recorded in the book of Revelation, is the most detailed word-picture we have of a glorified God Being. John saw “One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace...and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength” (Rev. 1:13-16). This was the glorified Jesus Christ! And the Father has that same appearance.

The Bible is replete with references to God having body parts: head, hair, face, eyes, ears, nose, nostrils, mouth, lips, tongue, shoulders, arms, hands, fingers, chest, back, waist and feet. Yet, there are those who say we cannot *know* what God looks like—that we can't really *believe* the Bible when it reveals in scores of places that God has such body parts. They refuse to take the plain statements of the Bible *literally*. They claim that all of these references are poetic metaphors. It is plain that when Moses wrote of “the outstretched ARM, by which the LORD your God brought you out” of Egypt (Deut. 7:19), that “arm” is indeed used here as a metaphor for God’s intervening power. But when God said He would let Moses see His “back parts” (Ex. 33:23), in what context could this be construed as a metaphor? None! This can *only* be taken LITERALLY.

By *spiritualizing away* the literal meaning of the Scriptures, these doubters come to the place where they don't know if the Bible is *ever* to be taken *literally*. They deny both the Word of God and the very God who inspired that Word.

God Is Not an Amorphous Blob!

Those who deny that God has form and shape argue that spirit cannot have form and shape. They contend that because God’s Spirit is compared to formless air in the NT, spirit in general cannot have form. The Bible is clear: God is spirit and God has form and shape. Therefore, spirit can have form and shape. That is not to say that spirit must always have form and shape. The fact that God’s Holy Spirit permeates Him and the entire universe is proof of that. It is obvious that spirit must be able to exist in different ways—either with form and shape, like God’s body or angelic beings, or without it, like the Holy Spirit.

Another contention of these “theologians” is that God does not need form and shape to exist. This is circular reasoning. It is silly to believe that God does not have form and shape simply because WE may not THINK that He NEEDS form and shape. It is not a question of WHAT WE THINK or whether or not He NEEDS form and shape. It is a question of whether or not HE HAS REVEALED HIMSELF AS HAVING FORM AND SHAPE—as He HAS in Scripture after Scripture after Scripture! If God wanted us to think that He does NOT have form and shape, why didn't He say, “I don't have form and shape”? Still, as absurd as it is, some religionists see the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as three distinct, yet inseparable, “Persons” constituting an amorphous cosmic blob.

Absolutely nothing in the Bible says the Father and

Son *can't* be separated, *spatially speaking*, when They so choose. The Bible does *not* say that either the Father or the Son is OMNIPRESENT bodily! Their Holy Spirit *is* OMNIPRESENT; therefore, the Father and the Son are only *omnipresent* in and through the divine presence of Their Spirit (Ps. 139:7-12, Jer. 23:23-24, Acts 17:28)!

Even after Christ was resurrected, He and His Father were still separated, *spatially*, from each other. Mary Magdalene mistook the resurrected Christ for a gardener. After she finally recognized who He was, Jesus then said to her, “Touch Me not: for I am not yet ascended to My Father...I ascend unto My Father, and your Father” (John 20:17 KJV). So after Christ’s resurrection, He was still *on this earth*, while His Father was still *in heaven*.

Some have said that since God created both *time* and *space*, the Father and Son are not limited by either. True! They both co-existed *before* time and space were created. That does not mean, however, that the Father and Christ *can't* occupy both time and space.

It is like the builder of a home. The *builder* exists before he builds a *house*, but after he constructs a home he can occupy it if he chooses. So it is with God. Time and space were created by God, and *neither* Father nor Son occupied time or space *before* time and space were created. But *after* their creation, either the Father or the Son *could* occupy time or space if They chose to do so. When Christ was on this earth, He occupied a home (space) in Nazareth, and He lived in that city for about 30 years (time). Can anyone say Christ didn't occupy *space* during a certain period of *time*? While He was on earth, His Father was certainly living somewhere—whether some place *in* space or whether somewhere *out of* space is irrelevant. But the fact that They *can* occupy time and space does *not* imply that They are *limited* by either time or space.

CHAPTER 4: *The Power of God*

Nowhere in the entire Bible is the *Holy Spirit* ever spoken of as a “divine Person.” Rather, “It” is the power, influence, nature, character, mind and life of God. The doctrine of the Trinity is simply nowhere found in the Bible.

Notice this frank admission by Trinitarians: “**The OT clearly does not envisage God’s Spirit as a Person.... God’s Spirit is simply God’s power. If it is sometimes represented as being distinct from God, it is because the breath [Heb. *ruach*, Spirit] acts exteriorly** (Is. 48:16; 63:11; 32:15)” (*New Catholic*

Great Is His Name

“There is none like You, O LORD; You are great, and Your name is great in might. Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? For that is your due...” (Jer. 10:6-7 NRSV).

God has many different names and titles as used in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. We can better understand our God and show greater respect to Him if we learn the meanings of some of the main names by which He called Himself in the Bible—names such as *Elohim*, *Yahweh*, *Adonai* or *EI Shaddai*.

ELOHIM—The Family Name

“The Hebrew word [*Elohim*]...signifies *strong*, or *mighty*; this appellation is used exclusively in the narrative of the first chapter, as expressive of the powers displayed in the work of creation.

“This word [*Elohim*] is plural in form, and although it most frequently means God it can be used in a plural sense. Thus it can refer to other gods (Ex. 20:3; Josh. 24:16), foreign gods (Jer. 5:7), gods of the nations (Is. 36:18)” (*The International Standard Bible Encyc.*, vol. 2, p. 505).

Elohim is a family name of God. The Greek Scriptures clearly reveal two Persons in the Godhead—the Father and His Son, Jesus. “Then God [*Elohim*] said, ‘Let US make man in OUR image, according to OUR likeness’” (Gen. 1:26). “Then the LORD God [*Yahweh Elohim*] said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of US, to know good and evil...’” (Gen. 3:22). And at the Tower of Babel, when man rebelled against his Maker: “Let US go down and there confuse their language...” (Gen. 11:7).

YAHWEH—A Personal Name

The God of Israel’s important *personal name*, *Yahweh*, is mentioned in the second chapter of Genesis: “This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD [*Yahweh*] God [*Elohim*] made the earth and the heavens” (Gen. 2:4). This name *Yahweh* is mentioned 11 times in this chapter, and is used nearly 7000 times in the entire Old Testament; whereas the name *Elohim* occurs only 2700 times in the Hebrew Scriptures.

God revealed His name, *Yahweh*, to Moses. Moses asked God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God [*Elohim*] of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” (Ex. 3:13). The Eternal God then told Moses, “I AM WHO I AM... Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (v. 14). Then God added, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The LORD God [*Yahweh Elohim*] of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations’” (v. 15).

“God spoke to Moses and said to him: ‘I am the LORD [*Yahweh*]. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as *God Almighty* [Heb. *EI Shaddai*], but by My name LORD [*Yahweh*] I was *not* known to them’” (Ex. 6:2-3).

God then told Moses, “Therefore say to the children of Israel: I am the LORD...I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD [*Yahweh*] your God [*Elohim*] who brings

you out from

under the burdens of the Egyptians...” (Ex. 6:6-7).

“The Covenant Name...*Yahweh* is the only truly per-

sonal name of God in Israel’s faith; the others are titular or descriptive

expressions. The name consists of *four consonants*, YHWH [known as the tetragram-

maton because only the consonants are known, the vowels are guesses]. Shorter forms also occur: *Yah* [Ex. 15:2]; the exclamation *halleluyah*, praise *Yah*, is frequent in the Psalms; *Yahu* and *Yo*” (*International Standard Bible Encyc.*, Vol. p. 506).

Yahweh signifies the ETERNAL ONE, He who *was*, and *is*, and *is to come*—the Immutable One: “For I am the LORD [*Yahweh*], I do not change” (Mal. 3:6). “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8).

Many Bible scholars have failed to notice that the Being, *Yahweh*, who appeared to the prophets and patriarchs of old was actually the Word (Gk. *Logos*, Spokesman). This divine Being later became the “Son of God,” when He was born of the virgin Mary.

ADONAI—God Is Lord

God’s rulership and lordship are expressed through three related names of God: *Adon*, *Adonai*, *Adonim*.

“*Adon* is the Lord as overlord or ruler. *Adonim* is the Lord as owner. *Adonai* is the Lord as blesser” (*The Companion Bible*, Appendix 4, “The Divine Names And Titles”). God is LORD and Master, or Ruler, over the entire universe which He created. “God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshipped with men’s hands, as though He needs anything, since He gives to all life and breath, and all things” (Acts. 17:24-25). The Hebrew word *Adonai*, translated *Lord* in many English translations, is rendered as *Kurios* in the Greek Scriptures.

SHADDAI—God Is Gracious

Shaddai is always translated as “Almighty” in the KJV, and this Hebrew name of God emphasizes God’s grace. God is the Great Giver. *Shaddai* is properly defined as “the All-Bountiful One.” “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am Almighty God [*EI Shaddai*]; walk before Me and be blameless. And I will...multiply you exceedingly’” (Gen. 17:1-2). As *EI Shaddai*, the Almighty Giver, God promised to *give* Abram and his descendants many blessings.

These are but a few of God’s many names and titles. God allows His name to be translated into many languages which are the modern equivalents of the original Hebrew and later Greek names.

We need not be restricted to the original biblical forms of God’s names in their original pronunciations. Some groups insist we call God: Jehovah or Y a h w e h .

However, the exact pronunciation of YHWH, translated in the KJV as the LORD, is unknown because the vowels were not preserved in the Hebrew text. What God is concerned about is that we reverence His name, treating all His names with awe and respect—“Holy and awesome is His Name” (Ps.

Encyclopedia).

Let us notice other candid admissions: **“The majority of NT texts reveal God’s Spirit as someTHING, not someONE; this is especially seen in the parallelism between the spirit and the power of God”** (*New Catholic Encyc.*).

“When a quasi-personal activity is ascribed to God’s Spirit, e.g., speaking, hindering, desiring, dwelling (Acts 8:29; 16:7; Rom. 8:9), one is *not* justified in concluding immediately that in these passages God’s Spirit is regarded as a *Person...*” (*New Catholic Encyc.*).

Some try to prove the doctrine of the Trinity by quoting the following verse: “For there are three that bear record *in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: 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” (1 John 5:7-8 KJV). None of the above *emphasized* words were **in any of the Greek manuscripts before the sixteenth century!** It is clear that, because Trinitarians had no scriptural argument to stand on, some of them INJECTED SPURIOUS SCRIPTURE because they had no other way to biblically support their views.

This Protestant source confesses that the Trinity doctrine is not even so much as mentioned in the NT! “Although *not* itself a biblical term, the Trinity has been found a convenient designation for the one God self-revealed in Scripture as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It signifies that within the *one essence* of the Godhead we have to distinguish *three ‘persons’* who are neither *three gods* on the one side, nor *three parts or modes* of God on the other, but co-equally and co-eternally God” (*Baker’s Dictionary of Theology*, 1979 ed., “Trinity”). What an admission!

Another Protestant work states, “The word Trinity *is not found* in the Bible, and though used by Tertullian in the last decade of the *second* century, it did not find a place formally in the theology of the church till the *fourth* century” (*The New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., “Trinity”).

The Catholic theologian Karl Rahner admits that, in the past, theologians have been “embarrassed by the simple fact that in reality *the Scriptures do not explicitly present a doctrine of the ‘immanent’ Trinity...*” (K. Rahner, *The Trinity*, p. 22).

This world’s theologians admit that the Trinity is not even once mentioned in Scripture. A belief in the Trinity doctrine is based on *human interpretation* of certain biblical texts. Therefore, let us carefully examine the OT and NT Scriptures to prove, directly from the Bible, that the Trinity doctrine *is an ungodly, unscriptural doctrine!* Acceptance of this doctrine dis-

torts and conceals the true nature of the Godhead.

God Uses “Air” or “Wind” to Symbolize His Spirit

If God would allow you to appear before His throne in heaven, you could see the Father, His Son and various “kinds” of spirit creatures (angels, cherubim, seraphim), but you would look in vain for the Holy Spirit (Rev. 4, 5). In fact, you would never see the Holy Spirit appear as a “person” or as any type of a corporeal “Being”—with a body, head, arms, legs or feet. Rather, God’s Holy Spirit is present *in* the Father and *in* the Son. It is also *in* all the holy angels, as well as being in God’s people. The Holy Spirit *permeates* the Father and Son, and *emanates* from Them into all the universe (Ps. 139:7-12).

In the Hebrew Scriptures, we read of the *ruach qodesh* and in the Greek Scriptures of the *pneuma hagion*, when referring to the Holy Spirit. Why does God use both the Hebrew *ruach* and Greek *pneuma*—both meaning “air,” “breath” or “wind”—to symbolize His Holy Spirit?

In the Bible, God uses various *symbols* (air, wind, water and oil) to depict His Holy Spirit. Of these, the one He uses the most is wind, air or breath. Why? Simply because this is the best symbol available to physical humans living in a physical universe. Air is *invisible*—so is God’s Spirit. Air is *life-giving*—so is the Spirit of God. Air is *powerful*—so is the Holy Spirit of God. Air is *everywhere*—and so is God’s Spirit.

God’s Creative Agency

The first place in the Bible where God’s “Spirit” is mentioned is in the story of creation. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the *Spirit of God* was hovering [Heb. *brooding*] over the face of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light” (Gen. 1:1-3).

Elohim gave the command—“Let there be light!”—and light appeared. What was the agency or the power by which God’s command was carried out? It was the Spirit of God which “was hovering over the face of the waters” that came into action and *did* what *Elohim* commanded.

God gave numerous creation commands, and the Spirit of God was the agency which carried out God’s will. “By the *word* of the LORD the heavens were *made*, and all the host of them by the *breath* of His

mouth.... Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done; He *commanded*, and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:6, 8-9).

This shows very plainly that when God the Father wants anything done, Christ simply gives a command and it is carried out by Their Spirit. All They have to do is give a “word” and Their word is carried out to a “t”! “You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth” (Ps. 104:30).

Later, when the “Word became flesh” (John 1:14), He exercised that same dynamic power by casting out demons with a sharp command: “And He [Christ] cast out the spirits [demons] with *His word*” (Matt. 8:16 KJV). And on numerous occasions, Christ commanded: “Arise...and go” to a crippled man, and he was healed (Matt. 9:6); “Be opened” to a deaf man, and his ears were opened and he received his hearing back (Mark 7:34); and when the waters of the Sea of Galilee became tempestuous, “‘Peace, be still.’ And the wind ceased and there was a great calm” (Mark 4:39)! Even as a human, Jesus Christ still had authority from the Father to give a word, or issue a command, and “it was done” by the power of God’s Spirit!

How is God Omnipresent?

Those who believe in a Trinity carelessly *assume* the Bible teaches that the *two Persons* known as the Father and the Son are *omnipresent*—everywhere present at once. It is the Holy Spirit that is OMNI PRESENT—not the individual Persons known as Father and Son.

King David asked God, “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from *Your presence*? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall fall on me,’ even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You” (Ps. 139:7-12). This Scripture plainly reveals that *God is everywhere*—but only *in and through* His Spirit.

God explained it this way, “‘Am I a God near at hand,’ says the LORD, ‘and not a God afar off? Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him?’ says the LORD; **‘Do I not fill heaven and earth?’** says the LORD” (Jer. 23:23-24). God the Father does *not*, in Person, “fill heaven and earth.”

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, does *not*, in Person, “fill heaven and earth.” But both Father and Son are omnipresent only in and through Their Holy Spirit. God—in Spirit—does *fill heaven and earth!*

God’s Spirit is Power

What, then, is God’s Spirit? First and foremost, it is the *dynamic power* and energy of the Great God who created and maintains the entire universe with the word of His power. “God [the Father], who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom [Christ] also He made the worlds; who [Christ] being the brightness of His [the Father’s] glory and the express image of His [Father’s] person, and **upholding all things by the word of His [Christ’s] power**, when He [Christ] had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty [Father] on high...” (Heb. 1:1-3).

The Bible reveals, “God [the Father]...created all things by Jesus Christ” (Eph. 3:9 KJV)! God’s “dear Son” (Col. 1:13 KJV) was the One whom the Father used as His “executive director” in creating the universe: “Who [Christ] is the image of the invisible God [the Father], the firstborn of every creature: For by Him [Christ] **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**” (Col. 1:15-17 KJV).

The Father created all things by or through His Son, Jesus Christ. In other words, the Father and Son are both Creators. But how did They create? They created “all things” *by and through* the omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient Spirit of God! Truly, **God is present everywhere through the agency of the Holy Spirit!** He can see what is going on anywhere in the limitless cosmos. “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him” (2 Chron. 16:9). God does not need a powerful telescope to see what is going on in the universe. His Spirit acts as His all-seeing “eyes” and as His all-hearing “ears.”

God Empowers His People

What was the real Source of Jesus Christ’s power? His power came from the Holy Spirit by which Jesus

was miraculously conceived (Matt. 1:18) and then lived a perfect, sinless life (1 Pet. 2:22). “The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him [Messiah], the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might” (Is. 11:2).

Christ kept close to His heavenly Father through diligent study of the Word of God and by fervent prayer and fasting. He fully realized the real Source of His power. “‘Not by [human] might nor by [human] power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts” (Zech. 4:6).

God reveals that His Spirit is a Spirit of awe-inspiring, infinite power! After Jesus Christ’s resurrection, He told His disciples, “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are **endued with power [Gk. *dynamos*] from on high**” (Luke 24:49)! Of course, He was referring to the Holy Spirit.

Christ spent 40 days teaching the disciples after His resurrection (Acts. 1:3). “And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, ‘which,’ He said, ‘you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but **you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit** not many days from now’” (Acts 1:4-5).

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you” (v. 8). Shortly afterward, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples as they were keeping the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). “**And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind [Gk. *pneuma*]**, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (vv. 2-4).

Immediately after the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter and the rest of the apostles began to speak God’s Word with great power and boldness. In his first sermon, Peter explained the Christian’s source of power: “Therefore [Christ] being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, **He [Christ] poured out this which you now see and hear**” (Acts 2:33).

“Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’” (v. 38). During the following months and years the apostles worked many mighty miracles—through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:43, 4:30, 5:12, 8:13, 14:3).

The Apostle Paul understood that the Holy Spirit was a Spirit of power: “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope **by the POWER of the Holy Spirit**” (Rom. 15:13). “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in POWER, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance” (1 Thess. 1:5). “For God has not given us a SPIRIT of fear, but of POWER and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7).

The genuine disciples of Christ are men and women who are “filled with the Holy Spirit,” having the inner power and strength imparted only by the Holy Spirit. Some of these disciples are given special miracle-working power through the indwelling presence of God’s Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:1-11).

CHAPTER 5: *The Mind of God*

As Genesis 1:26 states, God made man, quite literally, in His own “image...[and] likeness” (KJV)—“to resemble” Himself (Moffatt). Also, the way man thinks—his thoughts, feelings and emotions—are quite similar to the way his Creator thinks and feels. In other words, God created in man a God-like mind.

Sadly, even though man was created with a *marvelous* mind, most humans allow their minds to become so polluted, corrupted and twisted that it is difficult for them to grasp how a perfect, infinite, Eternal God can think and feel.

Just as man originates new ideas and concepts—so does God. Humans make choices—so does God. Human beings can experience *emotions*, such as: anger, love, hate, joy, sorrow and pleasure—and so can the Lord. People can also learn—as can the Almighty (Gen. 22:12, Heb. 5:8). We can certainly remember, but we can also forget that which we do not wish to remember—and so can God (Heb. 8:12).

A few Scriptures will suffice to show that God does indeed experience emotions like humans. When God saw that men had become totally corrupt and evil in the pre-Flood world, He regretted that He had made man: “And the LORD was *sorry* that He had made man on the earth, and He was *grieved* in His heart” (Gen. 6:6). God was furious when the Israelites made an idol out of a golden calf and began to worship it—so much so that He came close to wiping them out! God told Moses, “Now therefore, let Me alone, that My *wrath* may burn hot against them and I may consume them” (Ex. 32:10). This was because He was jealous—in a right way—for His people’s affection: “You shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is

Jealous, is a *jealous* God” (Ex. 34:14). God does not “hate” individuals, but He can hate what they do: “For the LORD God of Israel says that He *hates* divorce” (Mal. 2:16).

At the opposite end of the emotional spectrum, God can be pleased: “But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is *well pleased*” (Heb. 13:16). He experiences joy: “The LORD your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will *rejoice* over you with gladness, He will quiet you in His love, He will *rejoice* over you with singing” (Zeph. 3:17). We see here that God even *sings* as an expression of joy!

God has a sense of humor. Just observing the creation, like monkeys, would tell you that! Look, for example, at the duck-billed platypus. What a funny-looking animal! Such an unlikely assortment of uncommon features is still baffling to many evolutionists. When Christ walked on the earth, He observed the great zeal and boisterous personalities of two of His disciples—two brothers—James and John, “...to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17). This was certainly a humorous appellation. And in Isaiah 44:13-20, God employs humor to expose the sheer silliness of idolatry. He does so by pointing out that, with the same piece of wood, someone would make half of it into firewood to cook over and the other half into a god to worship—even though it’s the same piece of wood!

God’s overall personality is much like ours because we are much like Him. What really separates us from God is the kind of life we live as opposed to the way of life that He lives—His character.

The Character of God

Just what kind of character does God have? It can be summed up in 1 John 4:8—“God is love.” The particular word translated “love” in this verse is the Greek word *agape*. It denotes divine love—an outflowing, selfless concern. God’s way can be referred to as the way of “GIVE.” It is the way of giving, helping, sharing and serving others—which results in perfect peace, absolute fairness, kindheartedness, lasting happiness and cooperative accomplishment.

When only God and the *Logos* existed, They lived this way of life for eternity. God the Father loves the Son (Matt. 3:17) and the Son loves the Father. And it has always been so. As Amos 3:3 shows, two can’t walk together unless they agree. The Father and Christ have always been in complete agreement and cooperation.

This way of life became an inexorable LAW—a

rule of cause and effect. God lives His law! There is no power greater than God that *makes* Him live this perfect law. He lives this way because He *WILLS* to do so. However, as God’s will is absolute, He *CANNOT* live otherwise. He *CANNOT* because He *WILL NOT*.

God also gives *us* the choice of living His perfect way—of developing His holy, righteous character. For our benefit, God summarized His law of love in the Ten Commandments—broad principles governing human relationships—to teach us proper values. “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments” (1 John 5:3). Through His Spirit, we are able to do just that.

Law, of course, necessitates government—the legislation, execution and adjudication of law by an authority. In God’s Government, there is one Supreme Authority—God the Father. When He and the preincarnate Christ were the only Ones in existence, the One who became the Father was in charge. God’s Government is *NOT* a democracy! It is a *THEOCRACY*—a divine monarchy—with God reigning absolute over all.

The God Family is also referred to as the Kingdom of God—and any *KINGDOM* includes a territory, laws and a people over which a king rules. God’s rule encompasses infinity. The coming Kingdom of God on earth will rule all nations—with the resurrected, glorified, spirit-composed saints ruling with Christ (Rev. 5:10, 20:4).

God the Father is the Supreme Lawgiver. As the Government of God is based upon *LOVE*—outflowing concern for the good of the governed—the laws produced by God bring utopian peace and harmony to those who obey them.

Moses knew God was a loving, merciful Ruler (Ex. 34:5-7). Perhaps the best description of God’s character and personality was written by King David: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s” (Ps. 103:2-5).

“The LORD is *merciful* and *gracious*, *slow to anger*, and abounding in *mercy*. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities” (vv. 8-10).

David could speak about God’s mercy from personal, first-hand experience. During a moment of weakness, he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, and while trying to cover up his sin, he even had Bathsheba’s husband, Uriah, murdered (2 Sam. 11-12). Afterward, a deeply remorseful David confessed, “I

have sinned against the LORD!” The Prophet Nathan told him, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die” (1 Sam. 12:13)! David knew he deserved to die, and was thankful to a loving, merciful, forgiving God for having pardoned him, thereby canceling out his death penalty.

David waxes eloquent in his praise of God’s mercy. “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His *mercy* toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD *pities* those who fear Him. For he knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.... **But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them**” (Ps. 103:11-14, 17-18).

The Hebrew Scriptures, when rightly understood, reveal that the LORD was a very loving, merciful God! At a time when pagan religions sanctioned cruelty, oppression and bloody human sacrifices, *Yahweh’s* OT laws prohibited such. The first five books of the Bible clearly show that *Yahweh* commanded the Hebrews to show love and compassion even to their bondservants (Ex. 21:20). Cruelty was forbidden! And in the OT, God even forbade cruelty to animals (Deut. 25:4; Prov. 12:10), and demanded that kindness and consideration be shown even to birds who were nesting (Deut. 22:6-7)!

A God of Infinite Love!

It is equally clear that God, as revealed in the NT, is a God of infinite *love, mercy* and *compassion*. The Sermon on the Mount clearly reveals that Christ taught a way of love, mercy and forgiveness. “But I say to you, *love* your enemies, *bless* those who curse you, *do good* to those who hate you, and *pray for* those who spitefully use and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:44-45).

Christ commanded His followers, “Therefore you shall be *perfect*, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (v. 48). Jesus also said, “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him” (Luke 11:13)!

During Christ’s ministry, He was often “moved with compassion” at seeing suffering, and He repeatedly healed the sick and those who were demon pos-

sessed, and fed the hungry (Matt. 9:36, 14:14, 15:32, 20:34). “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about **doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the Devil**, for God was with Him” (Acts. 10:38).

When the inhabitants of a certain Samaritan village refused to let Christ spend the night in their village, James and John were infuriated. “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?” (Luke 9:54). But Christ turned and rebuked them saying, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For **the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them**” (vv. 55-56).

At Christ’s execution, even though He was betrayed, cruelly mocked, scourged and crucified—still He was not vindictive or full of hate. A compassionate Christ said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34)!

What one word best describes God’s character and personality? LOVE! During Christ’s ministry He often spoke about *love*, and constantly exemplified that *love* in all that He did. “A new commandment I give to you, that you *love one another*; as I have loved you, that you also *love one another*. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have *love* for one another” (John 13:34-35).

The Apostle John often mentioned love in his epistles. “Beloved, let us *love* one another, for *love* is of God” (1 John 4:7). “He who does not *love* does not know God, for **GOD IS LOVE**” (v. 8)!

“In this the *love* of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is *love*, not that we loved God, but that *He loved us* and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if *God so loved us*, we also ought to *love* one another” (vv. 9-11).

“And we have known and believed the *love* that God has for us. **GOD IS LOVE**, and he who abides in *love* abides in God, and God in him” (v. 16). We are told, “We love Him because He first *loved us*” (v. 19).

These and many other Scriptures reveal that **GOD IS LOVE!** Everything which God does for man is done out of LOVE.

How Can You Receive the “Mind of God”?

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ But **God has revealed them to us through His Spirit**. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man

knows the things of a man except *the spirit of the man* which is in him? Even so **no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God**" (1 Cor. 2:9-11).

There is a "spirit" in every human. Paul explains that God's Holy Spirit unites with this human "spirit in man" in order to communicate divine knowledge: "Now we [Christians] have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who ["which" KJV] is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God" (v. 12).

"But the *natural man* does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*" (v. 14).

Why are Christians able to understand the spiritual things given by God's Spirit? "For, 'Who has known **the mind of the LORD** that he may instruct Him?' But *we* [Christians] **have the mind of Christ**" (v. 16)! The indwelling presence of the Spirit of God imparts to the mature believer the "mind of the LORD." God's Spirit, within the hearts and minds of genuine Christians, enables them to have the very "mind of Christ."

Paul explains how real Christians receive the mind of God: "Because the *carnal mind* is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). "But you are not in the flesh but *in the Spirit*, if indeed the *Spirit of God* dwells in you. Now **if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His**" (v. 9).

This apostle says that "we [Christians] also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit...[are] eagerly waiting for the adoption [Gk. *sonship*], the redemption of our body," which will occur at the resurrection from the dead (v. 23).

"Likewise," says Paul, "the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses [our inability to communicate perfectly with God]. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself ["itself" KJV] makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (v. 26).

"Now He who searches the hearts [God does this through His Spirit] knows what the *mind of the Spirit* is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (v. 27). The Bible reveals that Christ, our Intercessor, makes intercession for His saints, and He does it through His Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25-26; 9:24).

Sometimes we weak human beings, when *praying to God*, find it difficult to put our thoughts into words, but God's Holy Spirit (His divine mind or intellect) *can communicate to God* those thoughts which we, because of human "weaknesses," sometimes find it difficult to

express.

Jude also revealed that God's people pray "in" the Holy Spirit. "These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit [of God]. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 19-21). What does it mean to "pray in the Holy Spirit"? It simply means that when God's people pray, His Holy Spirit influences and assists them in their prayers to their heavenly Father.

Paul asks, "For who has known the mind of the LORD?" (Rom. 11:34). He certainly believed, "We [Christians] have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). Paul said, "**Let this mind [of Christ] be in you which was also in Christ Jesus**" (Phil. 2:5).

When God Almighty grants us His Holy Spirit after *repentance* and *baptism* (Acts 2:38-39), His divine Spirit *joins with* our human "spirit." This makes us newly begotten sons or daughters of God. When God's Holy Spirit impregnates the *spirit* of our minds, it gives us greater *mind power* than we ever had before: "For God has not given us a SPIRIT of fear, but of POWER and of love and of a SOUND MIND" (2 Tim. 1:7).

Peter explains *when* and *how* God puts His mind within each believer: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

To repeat this critical point, only by receiving God's impregnating Spirit can humans become God's begotten sons and daughters: "**Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His**" (Rom. 8:9). "For by ONE SPIRIT we were all baptized into one body...and have all been made to drink into ONE SPIRIT" (1 Cor. 12:13; 1 John 3:9; 1 Pet. 1:23)!

God's Holy Spirit Inspires His People

The Holy Spirit is used by God to inspire the people of God in their actions. Peter said, "The prophets have inquired and searched diligently...searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was *in them* did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ..." (1 Pet. 1:10-11 KJV). "For prophecy never came by the will of man, but **holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**" (2 Pet. 1:21).

God inspired King David's writings. "For David himself *said by* the Holy Spirit, 'The LORD said to my Lord...'" (Mark 12:36). Further, we read, "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which **the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David** con-

cerning Judas [Iscaiot]...” (Acts 1:16). Though David “wrote” those words, God’s Spirit “spoke” them through him. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, also explained this point when he wrote, “The Holy Spirit *spoke* rightly *through* Isaiah the prophet to our fathers” (Acts 28:25).

In the book of Acts, we learn that there were “certain prophets and teachers,” including Paul and Barnabas, in the Church that was at Antioch (Acts 13:1). “As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them’” (v. 2). Does this mean that the Holy Spirit was a *person* which spoke? Absolutely not!

God had revealed to His “prophets and teachers” in the Antioch Church of God that He was going to ordain Paul and Barnabas as apostles to do an important work—and this knowledge was communicated to those “prophets and teachers” through the Holy Spirit. His Spirit strongly impressed upon the collective minds of the Church leaders that it was His will that Paul and Barnabas be ordained for a special work. “Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they *sent them away*. So, being *sent out* by the Holy Spirit, they...sailed for Cyprus” (Acts 13:3-4).

The Holy Spirit was the medium through which God communicated His will that His servants Paul and Barnabas should immediately leave on their first evangelistic campaign. After all, if YOU send a message by FAX, is the FAX system a *person* or simply the means that YOU used to communicate YOUR will?

Marvels of Men vs. Miracles of God

Man, through science and technology, has produced many scientific and technological marvels (Gen. 11:6). But God is the author of SPECTACULAR miracles!

A few decades ago, America sent astronauts to the moon who broadcast their historic landing to millions on earth. **God can do much greater things**—through the power of His omnipresent, omnipotent Spirit—by simply causing His words to be heard on earth.

Notice how the Father, at the time of Jesus’ baptism, was able to cause words to be spoken in order to convey His sentiments to the bystanders: “Then Jesus, when He had been baptized, came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a *voice* came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’” (Matt. 3:16-17).

Was that “voice” the actual voice of the Father? No!

Jesus said, “You have neither heard His [the Father’s] voice at any time, nor seen His form” (John 5:37).

Who was it that spoke saying, “This is My beloved Son...”? The Father caused the omnipresent power of His Holy Spirit to utter those words. God knows how to employ the Holy Spirit so as to cause a “voice” to be uttered, instantly, anywhere in the universe!

Notice how God reveals His divine will, as shown in the account of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch: “Now an *angel* of the Lord *spoke* to Philip, saying, ‘Arise and go toward the south’” (Acts 8:26). The Ethiopian eunuch was returning to Ethiopia from Jerusalem, where he had been worshipping, and sat reading the book of Isaiah. “Then the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go near and overtake this chariot’” (v. 29). Philip then expounded the meaning of the prophecy to the eunuch.

Man, through his marvelous technologies, can create instruments which can “speak” and communicate the thoughts of one human to another, thousands of miles distant. How much more can God, through His mighty Spirit, communicate with any “being” in the entire universe whenever He wills to do so!

What is God’s Holy Spirit? It is many things—including the *power* of God and the *mind* of God and the *life* of God, by which the Creator imparts *temporary life* to all of His physical creatures, and by which He will grant *eternal life* to all who repent of their sins, are baptized and are willing to walk in His way—His law and His love!

CHAPTER 6: The Life of God

What is the true Source of all forms of life—whether temporary, *physical* life or eternal *spirit* life? Have all forms of life resulted from the dynamic operation of God’s Holy Spirit? Or, did all life on the earth *evolve*? Some scientists think that it was possible for life on this earth to have evolved from “lovesick amoebae” sloshing against one another in the warm “primordial soup”—which they think existed on this earth some three and a half billion years ago.

Our everyday, familiar human experiences tell us that life comes only from life. Can life ever come from the non-living? Is it possible for life to evolve from inert, “dead” matter? Many scientists may *believe* so, but *none* can create life from inorganic, “dead” material. Rather, there is an unequivocal law—the **law of biogenesis which states that life can only come from pre-existent life!**

The Scriptures reveal that all life came from God. The Deity does *not* consist of physical *matter*, but—“God



is Spirit” (John 4:24). The angels of God were made out of spirit (Heb. 1:7). The Creator had to exist *before* He created the *angels*, and they existed before God created the physical earth, according to Job 38:4-7!

Most cosmologists believe that the earth was formed four billion years ago as a natural consequence of the “big bang” which scientists think happened some 10 to 20 billion years ago. We cannot gainsay either this time scale or the scientific theories proposed to describe the universe’s creation. They may all be true—however, we assert that this creation was not by blind accident, without purpose. The amazing creation of the universe, *however* it actually happened, was planned and executed by the Almighty God!

Both the Father and Son *always existed* as eternal, spirit “Persons.” They possess *inherent eternal life*. Originally, therefore, all life, both physical and eternal, came from God, the Great Life-Giver!

Who has always been alive? **“For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself”** (John 5:26)! Both members of the Godhead, the Father and the Son,



have *life inherent*. God has always possessed life, and will continue to live throughout the endless eons of eternity. No other beings, whether men or angels, have from eternity possessed inherent eternal life. Every being or creature received its life from the Great GIVER of all life!

“In the beginning was the Word [Gk. *Logos*], and the Word was with God [Gk. *Theos*], and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him [Christ] was *life*, and the *life* was the light of men” (John 1:1-4).

Before the Creator put mankind upon this earth, God determined that He would use the human family as the means whereby He would *reproduce* His very own “God kind” (Gen. 1:26, Eph. 3:15).

Genesis 1:20-25 reveals that God made all species of fish, sea creatures, birds, beasts and creeping things upon the earth—all after their own particular *kind*. The Creator gave them only *temporary life*—a fleeting existence.

Then, God and the Word created man in Their own image and likeness—to *resemble* Themselves (v. 26 Moffatt). What kind of life was this? “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life*; and man became a *living soul* [Heb. *nephesh*: living creature]” (Gen. 2:7 KJV). Man was created with the same temporary life—dependent on the breath of life—just as the animals.

How Humanity Rejected Eternal Life

Soon after the first humans were put in Eden, they rebelled against God and took of the forbidden “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” As a result, their Creator denied them access to the *tree of life* (Gen. 2:15-17, 3:1-24). “Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now,

Seven Trinity Absurdities Debunked!

The following Scriptures should convince any rational person of the utter *absurdity* of saying that the Father and Son are “one Being, one Entity”!

1. Jesus was begotten by His Father (Heb. 1:5). Did He beget Himself?
2. When He prayed to His Father (John 17:1-26), did He pray to Himself?
3. When Christ said His Father was greater than He was (John 14:28), did He mean that He was greater than Himself?
4. When Jesus cried out, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46), did He imply that He had forsaken Himself?
5. When Christ ascended to heaven after His resurrection (John 20:17), did He ascend to Himself?
6. When the Father said to His Son that He was to sit at His right hand until His enemies became His footstool (Ps. 110:1; Matt. 22:44), did this mean that Jesus was to sit on His own right hand?
7. When Jesus answered His disciples’ question about when He would return by saying, “Of that day and hour no one knows not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matt. 24:36), did Jesus mean that He Himself actually knew the day and hour but just made up an excuse to avoid telling them?

lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and *live forever*—therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden...and He placed cherubim [mighty angels] at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life” (Gen. 3:22-24).

If Adam and Eve had *obeyed* their Creator, they would have been given access to “the tree of life,” which means that God would have granted them “the Spirit of life”—His very own Holy Spirit, to impart to them *eternal life*. By their act of rebellion, God could see that the children of Adam and Eve would go the same way—Satan’s way, a *mixture* of both good and evil (Gen. 2:17). Consequently, all humans would sin, and the penalty of sin is death (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).

“The heart is *deceitful* above all things, and *desperately wicked*; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the *heart*, I test the *mind*, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Jer. 17:9-10)! This same moral failing was one reason God brought the Flood upon mankind, “Then the LORD saw that the *wickedness* of man was great in the earth, and that *every intent* of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5)!

Paul writes of man’s sinful condition, cut off from God “through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and *death* through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12). “For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many” (v. 15).

“Therefore, as through one man’s [Adam’s] offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift [of eternal life] came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man’s *disobedience* many

were made sinners, so also by one Man's *obedience* many *will be* made righteous" (vv. 18-19).

But how could the Great God lift man up, clean him up from all his sins and grant him eternal life? That could only occur if man repented of his sins, accepted Christ (who paid the death penalty in our stead) as personal Savior, was baptized, and then received God's precious Holy Spirit—a **Spirit which humans are definitely not born with** (Acts 2:38)!

God's Spirit of Life

Humanity, in general, could *not* receive God's Spirit, until *after* Christ was resurrected and glorified, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning *the Spirit*, whom those believing in Him would receive; for **the Holy Spirit was not yet given**, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:37-39)!

After Christ's resurrection, He told His disciples, "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with *power* from on high" (Luke 24:49). The Holy Spirit was *not* something which the Apostles were born with!

Every person is born with a *human* "spirit"—a spirit put in us by God sometime *before* everyone is born (Zech. 12:1, Rom. 8:16). This human spirit is *not* the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit is *added* to the human spirit *after* man truly repents of his sins and is baptized. (Acts 2:38; Rom. 8:16).

Many Scriptures speak of a "spirit in man" (Job 32:8, 1 Cor. 2:11), but in God's Word that "spirit" is always clearly distinguished from God's Holy Spirit—which can only be received *after* repentance and baptism!

The Word of God reveals, "**The [Holy] Spirit gives life**" (2 Cor. 3:6). But how can humans receive a bountiful supply of God's Spirit (Phil. 1:19)? Only through heartfelt communion in prayer to God, and by diligent study of His Word, can we humans drink in more of the living waters of God's Holy Spirit, His mind and His attitude. Christ said, "It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are *spirit* and *life*" (John 6:63 RSV). By studying God's Word, applying it in our hearts, we thereby drink in more of God's "Spirit of life."

"Begotten" of God's Spirit?

Jesus Christ was only the firstborn of "many brethren" (Heb. 1:6, 2:9-13). The Father also "begat

[Gk. *gennaō*]...us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits..." (James 1:18 KJV). It is through God the Father begetting us, that we receive from Him the divine characteristics (wisdom, faith, love, power, eternal life) that we so desperately need in order to put on His holy, righteous character. This begetting occurs after baptism—when the spirit life enters us.

As Christ was a "born" son by a resurrection from the dead—so we too will be born and given immortality at the resurrection. We are assured, "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does *not* have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:11-13). As the Apostle Paul said, "Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20).

It is the law of biogenesis which teaches us that life can only come from life. Christ's death could not give us life. Only a *living* Christ, operating in concert with His Father, can give us His SPIRIT OF LIFE. "For if when we were [God's] enemies we were reconciled to God through the *death* of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, **we shall be saved by His life**" (Rom. 5:10)! Notice that we are *not* saved by Christ's death, but by His *life*!

God's People Will Inherit Immortality and "All Things"!

In the "New Earth," all will be given free access to the water of life (Rev. 22:1, 17), will eat of the "tree of life" (vv. 2, 14), and will have their names written everlastingly in God's "Book of Life" (v. 19). They will forever be God's immortal "*sons and daughters*" (2 Cor. 6:18).

But what will be the end of the wicked? Those who refuse to receive God's "Spirit of life" will someday come to an end of the temporary physical existence. "For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up,' says the LORD of hosts" (Mal. 4:1).

Christ said unrepentant humans will be "destroy[ed] both soul and body in hell [Gk. *gehenna*]" (Matt. 10:28). "And these will go away into everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25:46). Their "punishment" will be everlasting *death*—total ANNIHILATION (2 Pet. 3:7-12)! God will never force immortality down anyone's throat. **Those who reject eternal life will inherit eternal death (Rom. 6:23)!**

Contrast that with the future of God's people—those who have learned to live His way. "But to you

who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings.... You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be *ashes* under the soles of your feet” (Mal. 4:2-3).

God has made a solemn promise to reward His people! “So a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. ‘They shall be Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘on the day that I make them My jewels’” (Mal. 3:16-17). “Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who *serves* God and one who *does not serve* Him” (v. 18). God assures us that “the righteous...[shall receive] ETERNAL LIFE” (Matt. 25:46)! Christians live “in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began” (Titus 1:2).

God promises, “**He who overcomes shall inherit all things** [the sun, moon, stars—everything!], and I will be his God and he shall be *My son*” (Rev. 21:7)! To the overcomers—those who overcome Satan, this evil world, and their own weak human nature—God promises to make them **co-owners of the entire universe**, immortal “sons and daughters” in His everlasting Kingdom (2 Cor. 6:18)!

CHAPTER 7: *Man’s Incredible Potential!*

Is anything else more important than coming to really *know* the true God? Does any other knowledge compare to learning how humans can be elevated from their *temporary, short-lived, physical* existence up to divine *eternal life*?

Today, there is great ignorance and confusion concerning: who is God, what is His genuine nature, and what is His plan for humanity.

Created Sons—Spiritual Sons?

In the book of Job (chapters 1 and 38), God calls the angels His created “sons.” Adam is also called “the son of God” (Luke 3:38). Both angels and men are the “created” sons of God.

The Bible is clear in teaching that while there is only “one God,” that God is a *divine Family* consisting of only *two* divine Personages—the Father and His Son. In the larger sense, God’s Family even includes His created “sons,” the angels of God (Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7).

Some Scriptures refer to carnal, unconverted, unrepentant men as “sons of God” because they are His “created sons.” “The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for

themselves of all whom they chose” (Gen. 6:2). “The sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them” (v. 4). Adam is also called a “son of God” (Luke 3:38).

Consequently, both angels and carnal men are sometimes called “sons of God” because they were both created by Him. Yet, when God spiritually classifies unrepentant, unconverted humans, He says of them, “You are of your father the devil” (John 8:44). Satan is the “spiritual father” of both rebellious angels and rebellious humans. He is “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves...and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others” (Eph. 2:2-3).

Some have misunderstood the true meaning of the following Scripture: “For to which of the *angels* did He [God] ever say: ‘You are My Son, today I have *begotten* You?’” (Heb. 1:5). While God *does* call the angels His “sons” in Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7, He *never* said to any angel, “**Today I have begotten You.**” God called Christ “His only begotten Son” (John 3:16), and He repeatedly says spirit-filled Christians are also His begotten children (1 Pet. 1:3, 1 John 5:1, 18 KJV).

Christ was a begotten Son of God. Those people who repent of sin, are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit can also become God’s spiritually “begotten” sons or daughters. Unconverted humans are God’s *created* children, but not His *spiritual* sons or daughters! The angels are only God’s *created* sons, but, unlike converted humans, angels are *never* spoken of as God’s *begotten* children!

Created After the God Kind!

A careful study of the Hebrew words *tselem* and *demuwth* reveals that God made man to look like God looked—“to resemble US” (Gen. 1:26 Moffatt). In examining the OT, it is readily seen that God made man to *resemble*, in mind and body, members of the God Family, the Father and Son. Jesus Christ came to this earth as *Immanuel*, God in human flesh (Matt. 1:23).

Why did God make humanity to *resemble* Himself? God has the most perfect “form” or “shape” of any living thing. He wanted us to share that God-like form so we can relate to and communicate with Him. Can you imagine trying to communicate with a “God” whose form and shape was like that of a bull, lion, fish, frog or a blob?

Mankind is privileged to have been made in the physical image and likeness of the Creator. **But it is**

only through the process of salvation that humans can be made into the spiritual image of their Creator (Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:49; Col. 3:10).

Through the process of spiritual conversion, we can develop the literal character (Gk. *charakter*, Col. 3:10) of God and of Christ, whose mind and character were one with the Father's (Heb. 1:3)! Those human beings whose minds are "renewed" (Eph. 4:23) will also be changed into "divine Beings" when they are born of the Spirit into God's Great Family (John 3:6, Luke 20:35-36). Some professing Christians believe "God HAS a family," but stoutly *deny* that "**GOD IS A FAMILY**"!

Yet, the Bible clearly shows that humans, through the process of salvation, can become actual *bona fide* members of the DIVINE FAMILY, glorified, immortal sons and daughters of God (2 Cor. 6:18), full members of the GOD FAMILY!

The proponents of the Trinity doctrine would have you believe that the God Family is *forever limited* to only three divine Persons. According to this doctrine, God either *can't* or *won't* admit humans into His universe-ruling Family. The truth is: **Satan does not want humanity to understand that their true destiny is to be born into the Family of God!** Why? Because as full-fledged members of God's Family, the glorified saints will be *higher* than the angels, and will actually *judge* them (1 Cor. 6:3).

The Word of God plainly teaches that God is a Family. "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father...from whom **the WHOLE FAMILY in heaven and earth is named**, that He would grant you...to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:14-16). Notice how *The Living Bible* paraphrases this, "When I think of the wisdom and scope of His [the Father's] plan I fall down on my knees and pray to the Father of all **the great Family of God.**"

God's Family includes not only the Father and the Son but also humans who, through conversion, have become God's spiritual "*sons and daughters*" (2 Cor. 6:18)! Long before man was created, God's Family was an established *reality*. The Family of God is the oldest Family in the universe!

God calls His people, "**fellow citizens with the saints and members of the HOUSEHOLD of God**" (Eph. 2:19)! Faithful, obedient members of the Church of God are part of God's Family, His very household.

The Apostle Paul said, "I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the **HOUSE OF GOD**, which is the CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15)! Each member of God's Church is a member of God's "house," His "household," His divine "Family"!

We will be God's children in that household. "He who overcomes shall *inherit all things*, and I will be his God and he shall be *My son*" (Rev. 21:7). We will forever be "His offspring" (Acts 17:28-29)—not some lesser kind of creatures inhabiting a lower plane of existence. But as God, we will be true-bred *offspring*, just as any creature is always of the same "kind" as its parents. The offspring of the *bovine* family (LL *bovinus*) is a "calf," the progeny of the *canine* kind (L. *Canidae*) is a "pup" or "whelp," the young of the *feline* family (NL *Felidae*) are called "kittens."

When the saints are born as the immortal sons and daughters of God, they will then be of the "*God kind*"—not some lower kind of creature! To say that God's immortal sons will be anything *less than* their Father is to insult the Almighty.

The oldest family in the universe is the **ancient Family of God**. God (Heb. *Elohim*, Gk. *Theos*) is the family name of the Deity. Converted Christians are the spiritual children of God; however, the Father and Son are the only eternally *un-created* members of that Family!

Will There Be Many Gods?

Will God someday have "*many Gods*" in His Family? No! Are the Father and Son "two Gods"? No! The Father and Son are "One"—not *two* Gods! Will Christians, when made immortal children of God, ever be as great, as wise, or as glorious as either God the Father, or His Son, Jesus Christ? No!

What is a family? A family is a group of persons who usually *live together* and are generally *related*, or joined together as a *unit*. A family always has to have *more than one person* or member in that family—otherwise it would *not* be a family. **This is equally true of God's Family!** It, too, is made up of more than one Being. There are *two* divine Beings in that divine Family—at *present!* But there is only *one* God.

Do you trust the Bible? Jesus Christ says, regarding certain apostate people who claim to be spiritual "Jews" (Christ's disciples), but aren't: "**I will make them come and worship before your feet**" (Rev. 3:9). This is a promise of Jesus Christ! Yet the Word of God reveals that humans must not worship angels or anything less than God! The Apostle John was rebuked by an angel for falling before him in worship: "I [John] fell down to *worship* before the feet of the *angel* who showed me these things. Then he said to me, See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant...Worship God!" (Rev. 22:8-9).

Now, since God absolutely *forbids* us to worship

angels or humans (Acts 10:25-26), but allows the overcomers to be *worshipped*, Revelation 3:9 can only mean that those “overcomers” will then be elevated up to the very “God plane” and that, as members of the very God Family, they will *then* be worthy of worship!

This shows that the overcoming saints will no longer be human beings, but will at that time be divine Beings—members of the Family of God—sons and daughters of their eternal Father! (Rev. 21:7, 2 Cor. 6:18).

The Bible proves that God’s Family is *not* a “closed Family,” as the Trinity concept requires. God’s Family is now “open” to receiving innumerable “sons” and “daughters” and will someday include millions, billions or perhaps even trillions of members—all sharing God’s very nature, His power, character, glory and immortality. Yet that family will always be one God.

Recall that the Apostle Peter clearly revealed that God’s people are to be “partakers of the *divine* nature” (2 Pet. 1:4). Yet, the immortal sons and daughters of God will never possess the *same degree* of power, intelligence, majesty or glory as God now possesses. We will not have the same rank, function or office as either the Father or the Son. In the Kingdom of God, the immortal sons and daughters of God will always be *junior* members of the divine Family.

Even Jesus Christ said, “**My Father is greater than I!**” (John 14:28). If even Christ is not as great as the Father, then *neither* will the glorified, immortal children of God ever be *as great* as either the Father or His Son. The Father, as the *senior* member of His divine Family, will always be *pre-eminent* over all beings in the entire universe. His “firstborn Son,” Jesus Christ, will always be the first and greatest of His children.

Man’s Incredible Destiny

Our Creator has repeatedly assured us that He does *not* want a single human to *perish* but that everyone should come, eventually, to know His way. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not *perish* but have *everlasting life*” (John 3:16).

God has decreed that, sooner or later, every person will come to the knowledge of His precious truth (1 Tim. 2:4, 2 Pet. 3:9). Everyone will eventually be given a “chance” to understand God’s way and follow it, if they so choose.

No physical being could possibly have a higher *destiny* than to be born as an immortal *son* or *daughter* in the eternal universe-ruling Family of God. God will make the “overcomers”—those who voluntarily choose to follow His way—*co-inheritors* (*co-owners*) of the

entire universe! What a wonderful, transcendent future!

It is sad to see that Satan has not only deceived the “whole world” (Rev. 12:9), but has also deceived the vast majority of professing Christians into believing that humans who make it into the eternal Kingdom of God will *not* be on God’s *plane of existence*. Most Christians have been taught that once they are in God’s eternal Kingdom, they will always exist as some sort of *lower creatures*, higher than man, but apparently lower than the angels, and much, much lower than God! How wonderful it is to know God’s Truth—that our great, loving God will actually *elevate* those who are now humans to His eternal, spirit plane of existence as His very own glorified, immortal, sons and daughters!

Though Christians are now God’s “begotten” children (1 John 5:18 KJV), we are *not yet* spiritually mature, fully formed sons and daughters in that divine Family. Since we are still “sinful,” we are *not now* worthy of worship (Acts 10:25-26). But after we are made *immortal*, when the seventh trumpet sounds, we will *then* be worthy of “worship.”

What a wonderful master plan of salvation! All humans who have ever been born will be given a chance to know God and His way of life—sooner or later! Those who *reject* God’s way of life will experience “the second death”—annihilation, total *extinction* (Rev. 21:8)! But those who accept and live by God’s wonderful way of life will be granted *immortality* in the everlasting Kingdom of God (Rev. 22:14)!

God’s ultimate purpose for mankind is that all humans might be elevated from existing as lowly *physical* beings to becoming fully formed *divine* beings. This will occur when the mortal people of God will be changed into *immortal* sons and daughters of the Almighty (1 Cor. 15:50-57, 1 Thess. 4:13-18). That’s the moment when mankind will achieve complete victory over *death*! Human beings will then have been changed by God into DIVINE BEINGS! “Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, ‘**Death is swallowed up in victory**’” (1 Cor. 15:54)!

The Physical Mirrors the Spiritual

We can know about God as Creator. But with our natural mind, we can only understand the spiritual in terms of what we know about the physical. In this way God’s spiritual “invisible nature” can be discerned through His creation (Rom. 1:20).

When God reveals Himself as our spiritual Father, we understand His role as Progenitor, Protector and Provider through our knowledge of our physical

fathers. When God calls us His children, we can comprehend that the physical relationship we now experience is a *type* (a true model, not simply an analogy or figure of speech without actual reality) of the spiritual relationship we will enjoy.

When the Creator speaks of His spiritual Family, we can understand our future role functions and interrelationships because God has created the physical family in its ideal form for the express purpose of teaching us these things! Physical humans, if they desired, could know these things and even more by examining the physical creation as a mirror of the spiritual (Ps. 19:1).

However, this does *not* mean that man, of himself, would fully *know* God any more than we could say we know Abraham Lincoln or George Washington by simply reading about them or seeing pictures of them. To really know a *man* we must have close, personal contact. To know *God* we must also have close personal contact with Him—and this is only possible through God’s Spirit (1 Cor. 2:11). “For through Him [Christ] we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Eph. 2:18-19).

Only through God’s Spirit can we grow to fully understand God’s mind, purpose and character (Eph. 4:3-6). Through His Spirit, we are able to develop His holy, righteous, loving character. That is how we *truly* come to KNOW God—by living His perfect way through obeying His law. As John wrote, “**Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments**” (1 John 2:3).

The truth about the nature of God is the most important knowledge you can have! In order to truly understand God’s law, it is necessary to comprehend the vital truth about who and what God is and what He is doing. God’s law reflects His *character*. **We must keep God’s law to develop the holy, righteous character of God.** Why must we develop the character of God? It is so that we may later **enter the Family of God and inherit the Kingdom of God.** The biggest focus and the most important understanding we can have is that **God is reproducing Himself through humanity!** This is integral to the nature of God—a growing Family. We should be growing now in God’s mind and character as expressed through God’s law. Everything else is subordinate to this supreme understanding.

The City of God

Where will the Great Family of God reside eternally? Christ promised that the “meek” will “inherit the

earth” (Matt. 5:5), *not* go to heaven as some suppose! The Bible reveals that ultimately, both the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, will establish Their eternal abode with *men* right here on *this* planet (Rev. 20, 21, 22).

God will someday establish His universe-ruling capital city, the “New Jerusalem,” on this earth (Rev. 3:12, 21:1-2, 10). Both the Father and His Son will then live in that glorious city, right here on a renewed, beautiful earth! This is the eternal “city” which Abraham envisioned: “For he waited for *the city*...whose Builder and Maker is God” (Heb. 11:10).

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth.... Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, *coming down* out of heaven from God [to the “new earth”], prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:1-2). “And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He [the Father] will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and **God Himself [Father and Son] will be with them and be their God**’” (v. 3).

“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain” (v. 4). God solemnly promises, “He who *overcomes* shall *inherit all things*, and **I will be His God and he shall be My son [or daughter—2 Cor. 6:18]**” (v. 7).

God gives us this assurance: “And there shall be no more curse, but **the throne of God [the Father] and of the Lamb [Jesus Christ] shall be in it [New Jerusalem]**, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see *His face* [Yes, the Father has a “face”!], and His NAME shall be on their foreheads” (Rev. 22:3-4). “And they shall reign [rule] forever and ever” (v. 5)!

What an awe-inspiring destiny awaits those who, with God’s help, truly conquer themselves and develop the mind and character of God! These overcomers will be granted co-ownership of the vast universe and immortality in the “Great Family of God” (Eph. 3:15). What more could anyone possibly wish for? ☐

If you would like to learn more about man’s incredible destiny, be sure to call or write for our vital booklet on this awe-inspiring subject.

It is entitled:

Your Ultimate Destiny

See the inside cover for phone numbers and addresses.