



BIBLE DOCTRINES - *Two*



Doctrines of



God the Father



GOD THE FATHER

God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you (Rom. 6:17). All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works (II Tim. 3:16,17).

The great need of believers today is the knowledge of the Word of God, *and* the knowledge of the *doctrines* of the Word of God. Christians must feed upon the Word of God to grow thereby. In so doing the truths of God will then act upon a believer's life and conduct. The fact that many will not heed sound doctrine is a sign of the times—a sign that Christ is soon coming. *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (I Tim. 4:1). Truth will shape and error will misshape.*

There is a vast difference between a believer holding the Truth, and the Truth holding the believer. Therefore, in the study of the doctrines of Scripture, may the student pray that not only does he *know* them, but that they shall become a reality to his soul and spirit.

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The word "theology" comes from the Greek word *Theos*, meaning God. Thus, theology is the doctrine of God. To begin a study of the many Bible doctrines we must begin with the Source of all things — God! We must begin with God — there is no one, nothing, before Him. Before anything came into being, He was: *In the beginning God . . .* (Gen. 1:1). *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners . . .* (Heb. 1:1); *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* (John 1:1).

Our first subject for study will be:

I. THE NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD

The name of a person, place, or thing is that by which it is known. The names of God are those by which He is known. They denote His character, and are the means by which He is known to His people; *Save me, O God, by thy name* (Ps. 54:1a); *They that know thy name will put their trust in thee* (Ps. 9:10).

The King James Version distinguishes the names of God by the use of printer's type. Thus, when you read in the Old Testament the word "God," you know that it is translated from the Hebrew word *Elohim*; the words "LORD," "GOD", are from the Hebrew word *Jehovah*; and the word "Lord" is from *Adonai*. Each of these words, *Elohim, Jehovah and Adonai*, describes the character of God and of His actions toward mankind, distinguishing between the saint and the sinner.

A. Elohim.

The word Elohim, which is translated as "God," is found more than 2300 times in Scripture. Yet this is not a personal name, but it is God's official title — what He is, God! — Elohim! The word Elohim is not only used for God, but for men (*I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of most High* — Ps. 82:6 with John 10:34,35) and for idols (*Thou shalt make thee no molten gods* — Ex. 34:17). It is the title of God just as the word "president" is the title of an office. God's official name is Elohim — His office.

Elohim is a plural noun. To us plural means two or more. This is true in English, but not in the Hebrew language. We have two numbers in English: singular, meaning one; plural, two or more. In Hebrew, however, we have three numbers: singular, meaning one; dual, two; uni-plural, denoting three or more. Thus, Elohim is a uni-plural noun — three or more. Genesis 1:1 states: *In the beginning God* [three or more] *created the heaven and the earth*. Another suggestion of the Trinity is found in Genesis 1:26,27: *And God* [Elohim] *said, Let us make man in our image*.

The literal meaning of Elohim is: The Putter-forth of Power, The Strong One. And in the first chapter of Genesis, Elohim is described as putting forth His power in ten words: created, made (fashioned), moved, said, saw, called, divided, set, ended and blessed.

No creature has power but that which God has given him. Power belongs unto God. Man has to work for his power in all phases of life; God only has to speak, and it is done. God not only creates, but keeps what He brings forth out of nothing.

Elohim (God) has power in government. Daniel pointed this out, and Nebuchadnezzar had to experience that *the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men* (Dan. 4:17). With pride filling his heart, Nebuchadnezzar was struck with madness until he acknowledged that the Most High did rule. Then only did his reason return unto him, and he became a firm believer in this truth. Elohim (God) has

power in judgment, whether upon man or nation. When He smites, none can resist Him.

El is the singular form of Elohim: It is found 250 times. It is also joined to the names of men, such as Samuel (asked of God) and Elijah (Jehovah is my God).

B. Jehovah.

Remember, the words GOD and LORD (all capital letters) in the King James version are translated Jehovah. Jehovah is the personal name of God. It is that Name which is above every other name. The meaning of the word is Redeemer. Every time it is used in the Scriptures it is connected with deliverance: *And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out and the LORD [Jehovah] helped him; and God moved them to depart from him* (II Chron. 18:31). While the personal name of God, Jehovah, was written, it was never pronounced. The Jews considered that name too sacred to be spoken by human lips. Hebrew uses consonants, with the vowels supplied by small marks or pointing. The consonants are JHVH. When the scribes came to copy this name, they washed themselves and their pens. When public readers of the Scriptures came to this name they would not pronounce it, fearing that they would take it in vain, but would instead substitute the word Elohim or Adonai.

When the LORD [Jehovah] appeared unto Moses in the burning bush, and commissioned him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt into the Promised Land, Moses asked, *When I come unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? God said unto him, I AM THAT I AM ... I AM hath sent me unto you* (Ex. 3:13,14). Jehovah is the eternal I AM. There is no past nor future with Jehovah; He is the Eternal Present; the self-existent One — One that made Himself known.

In Exodus 20:2 we read: *I am the LORD thy God.* "I am Jehovah thy Elohim." There were many different elohims, but there was only one *Jehovah*. You read in the Word, the "Elohim of Israel"; but never, the "*Jehovah* of Israel"; for there were no other Jehovahs. When Elijah and the prophets of Baal had a contest, it was to determine which was the true Elohim (God), *Jehovah* or Baal.

Jehovah was related in a redemptive way with His own people, but His relationship to His creatures (this includes unregenerate men) was always as Elohim. The same today. God is God of all the unsaved, but He is *Jehovah*, the Father, of all who are saved. The Book of Jonah illustrates this. In chapters three and four the people called upon Elohim, but Jonah called upon *Jehovah*. They were lost; he was saved. They became saved, and could, after their salvation, call God *Jehovah*. See other Scriptures: Judges 7:14,15; II Chronicles 19:6-9; Genesis 7:16; I Samuel 17:46.

We have another name for God, and that is *JAH*. It is so translated once in the KJV, and occurs a further 48 times in the Hebrew. *JAH* is a contraction of *Jehovah*, and has the same meaning. *Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him* (Ps. 68:4). The name *JAH* is always connected with praise, and is first found in Exodus 15:2.

We believe that the word "God" (Elohim), being plural in Genesis 1:1, definitely points to the *Trinity* creating the heavens and the earth. Yet we find that modern thought interprets this differently. Some would say that this should read, "In the beginning *Gods* created the heavens and the earth." And they reason that Israel, to begin with, believed in many gods, but that their religion evolved into monotheism.

This has proved difficult to many college students. Is there any Scripture that will refute this? Absolutely. Turn to Deuteronomy 6:4 — *Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD.* Now, put the words of *Elohim* and *Jehovah* in this passage and you will see that the Word plainly reveals the Trinity of Genesis 1:1: "Hear, O Israel, JEHOVAH our ELOHIM [*three or more persons*] is one JEHOVAH." Therefore, man began with a belief in *one* God and later degenerated into the depths *and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things* (Rom. 1:23).

C. Adonai.

The term *Adonai* means master, or owner; one who owns, one who rules, one who blessed his own. It is found first in Genesis 15:1,2: *After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying. Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?*

Adonai can always be known by the word "Lord," or "lord" in the Old Testament of the King James Version. There are two different forms of this word: *Adon*, which is singular, and *Adonai*, which is plural. *Adonai* is used two ways when related to man and his earthly relationships: As a *master* of his servants — *And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter. And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master...* (Gen. 24:9,10a); and as a *husband* to his wife — *Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord [Adonai]* (I Peter 3:6a). See also Genesis 18:12.

In order to pay a debt a Hebrew could sell himself to another Hebrew, who would then become his master. But he could not sell himself forever; for at the Sabbatical Year, or the Year of Jubilee, all were freed. Yet, there was a way by which he could become a servant forever, and that was by choice: *And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever* (Ex. 21:5,6). Paul said that he was a bondservant of Jesus Christ, bought by blood and bound by Love! Every time you use the name *Lord* Jesus Christ, you say, "He is my Master." *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am* (John 13:13).

D. Jehovistic Combinations.

1. Jehovah-jireh — "the Lord will provide." *Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen* (Gen. 22:14). This was the occasion when Abraham led his son, his only begotten son, Isaac, to the mount. Isaac carried the wood; Abraham carried the knife and the fire. His son asked concerning the sacrifice. To this Abraham replied, *God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering.* And God did! Before Abraham could kill his son as a sacrifice demanded by God, the angel of the LORD stayed his hand; his eyes looked upon the thicket and saw the ram which the LORD had provided. Nearly two thousand years ago the Son of God Himself carried, a wooden burden, the Cross; and the Father held the fire (which speaks of judgment), and the knife (which speaks of death), and God *did* provide *Himself* a Sacrifice for our sins — His Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Have you found Him to be your *Jehovah-jireh*? Whatever may come, remember, He is *Jehovah-jireh* — "the LORD will provide."

2. Jehovah-Rapha — "the Lord that healeth." [The LORD] *said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD [Jehovah-Rapha] that healeth thee* (Ex. 15:26). He is LORD, The Physician. The word "heal" is an interesting word and means to repair, mend, cure. And there is perfect cure in *Jehovah-Rapha*, for *by his stripes we are healed* (I Peter 2:24). See also Psalm 41:4.

3. Jehovah-nissi — "the Lord our Banner." *Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi* (Ex. 17:15). The LORD is our Victory. Christ crucified is our Banner of Victory!

4. Jehovah-Qadash — "the LORD that sanctifies." *Ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD [Jehovah- Qadash] which sanctify you* (Lev. 20:8). And God is the same LORD of the Christian as of the Hebrew: *Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. ...By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all* (Heb. 10:9,10). See also Hebrews 10:14, and Exodus 31:13.

5. Jehovah-shalom — "the LORD our Peace." *Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovah- shalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites* (Judg. 6:24). There is only one way to secure peace today, and that is through the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Peace: *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us* (Eph. 2:14). See also Romans 5:1.

6. Jehovah-Tsidkenu — "the LORD our Righteousness." *In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS* (Jer. 23:6). Israel shall be restored to the Land of Promise once again, and during the Millennium Jehovah shall be called *Jehovah-Tsidkenu*. The LORD did come, the only righteous one, yet they crucified Him. But one day He shall come the second time, and Israel shall claim the Lord Jesus Christ as their own Righteousness. Christ Jesus is the only Righteousness that any can claim.

7. Jehovah-Shammah — "the LORD is There." *It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD [Jehovah-Shammah] is there* (Ezek. 48:35). When Israel is restored to the land, and the earth shall be full of knowledge of the LORD, Jerusalem shall be called *Jehovah-Shammah* — "the LORD is There."

8. Jehovah-Sabaoth — "the LORD of Hosts." *This man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts [Jehovah-Sabaoth] in Shiloh* (I Sam. 1:3a). Israel is the Host; the LORD is the LORD of Hosts. See also Exodus 12:41; II Kings 6:14-23; Romans 9:29; James 5:4.

9. Jehovah Ra-ah — "the LORD my Shepherd." *The LORD [Jehovah Ra-ah] is my shepherd; I shall not want* (Ps. 23:1). A little girl was quoting this verse, said: "The LORD is my Shepherd, why should I worry?" Have you found that Source of Strength? Have you found perfect peace by following the Saviour wherever He leads? Fears will not annoy; darkness cannot distress; poverty is not able to destroy if Jesus is your *Jehovah Ra-ah* — your Shepherd.

E. Elohist combinations.

As there are the Jehovistic combinations, so are there the *Eloistic* combinations.

1. El Elyon — "Most High God." *Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God [El Elyon]* (Gen. 14:18). Here

in the King James Version the name is translated "most high God."

Elyon means highest; with *El* it means the most high God. See also Deuteronomy 32:8; Daniel 4:34,35. Jesus Christ is our *El Elyon* — *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth* (Matt. 28:18b).

2. El Olam — "Everlasting God." *Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting [El Olam] God* (Gen. 21:33). Yes, God is the "Everlasting God" - "the God of All Ages."

3. El Shaddai — "Almighty God." This is first found in Genesis 17:1: *When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God [El Shaddai]; walk before me, and be thou perfect.* "El" means the Strong One. *Shaddai* comes from the word *shad*, meaning a breast, a woman's breast. This is illustrated in Isaiah 28:9. *El Shaddai*, therefore, means the Breast of God, the Nourisher, Strength-giver, the Satisfier. One of the most cherished names of God held by Bible students is this one — the Strength-giver, the All-Sufficient God, the All-Bountiful God, the God Who is Enough! The God Who is Able. *He is able also to save them to the uttermost* (Heb. 7:25). Why? Because Jesus Christ our Lord is our *El Shaddai*, the God Who is Able.

II. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

A. False and True Systems of Theology.

1. Deism. This system acknowledges that there is a God, but denies that God sustains the creation. "God is the Maker, but not the Keeper."

2. Atheism. Those who hold to this belief - so called - exclude God altogether.

3. Scepticism and Infidelity. Sceptics and infidels are full of doubt and disbelief with regard to God, especially the God of the Bible.

4. Agnosticism. This school of thought does not deny God, but denies that God can be *known*.

5. Pantheism. Everything is God, and God is everything. Everything you see is God. God is *in* everything. God and creation are synonymous.

6. Polytheism. This is belief in many Gods. There are various gods over us; these in turn have gods over them; and these have gods over them, and so on.

7. Tritheism. This is the doctrine of *three* Gods.

8. Dualism. There are *two* Gods: a God that is Good, and a God that is Bad. They are both equal in power and persuasion.

9. Theism. The belief in the existence of a personal God is known as theism. Should one boast in this, his boasting is vain, for one must know *who* God is, and *what* His name is, in order to trust Him.

10. Monotheism. This is the doctrine of one God. We are monotheists. Jews and Mohammedans are monotheists. If that is true - are they saved? No! *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble* (Jms. 2:19). Believing in one God is not sufficient, but *if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved* (Rom. 10:9).

B. Evidence of the Existence of God.

May the student realize that the Bible never tries to prove there is a God. It assumes that man knows that there is a God, and states, *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God* (Ps. 14:1).

There are many evidences of the existence of God, the first being:

1. From Reason.

a. The Intuitional Argument: That which is in man, sometimes called the "first-truths"; that belief that knows that there is a God without anyone revealing that fact. A child knows there is a God. Who has told him? All races of the world know there is a God, though they are not worshipping the One and Only and True God. There is no such thing as a true atheist. The evidence of the existence of God is in man — born in him.

b. The Cosmological Argument: This is the argument from cause and effect. Here is the world —how did it come to be? There is a Cause or Power behind everything. There must be a Maker or Creator. It is easy to think that back of the Creation is God, but it is impossible to think back of God.

c. The Teleological Argument: By this we mean design. There is perfect design and order in the universe. The snowflake is a beautiful pattern that man could never duplicate. Why does ice rise to the top of the water and not to the bottom when it freezes? Were this not so, then all water would eventually freeze, and the fish would perish. How is it possible that spring, summer, fall and winter all come in order, and have been doing so for millenniums? Why is it that the sun comes no closer to the earth (burning it) nor goes further away (freezing it)? There *must* be a Designer behind all creation — and that Designer is God!

d. The Anthropological Argument: This argument is based upon the moral and intellectual qualities of man. Man is a direct result of the creation of God, as other creatures are; yet these creatures do not possess the moral and intellectual qualities of man. Why? If man could create them, so should animals. But man has the capacity to know, to reason. If man did not get these qualities from some One, where did he get them?

2. From History. Truly, history is His story! History verifies the fact that there is a God. History has proved the fact of God against those who have repudiated His laws and ways. Some one has said, "Prophecy is the mould of history." God speaks, and years later what He spoke is fulfilled to the letter. History fulfils what God said would happen.

3. From Experience. This is one of the greatest proofs for the existence of God. Men have been transformed by the power of God. There is no explanation other than God! Prayers which have been answered attest to the existence of God.

4. From Scripture.

a. Biblical Assumption. The Bible is the only Book that is God-inspired. The Bible is the standard for all right conduct in the world. If the Bible is not the Word of God, then we have no God; we can never know God.

b. Christological Revelation. In Jesus Christ, God came down to man to tell us what God is like. If Jesus is not God, then there is no God. God can never be known. *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him* (John 1:18). But Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and He and His life prove the existence of God.

c. Prophetical Declaration. God forecast the future. Anyone who can do this is more than man. Man cannot always tell the past, much less the future. It is said that when Christ was crucified there were twenty-five distinct prophecies fulfilled— prophecies written centuries before.

III. THE NATURE OF GOD.

A. Definitions of God.

1. Scriptural Definitions.

a. **God is a Spirit** — *God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth* (John 4:24).

b. **God is Light** — *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all* (I John 1:5).

c. **God is Love** — *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love* (I John 4:8).

d. **God is a Consuming Fire** — *For our God is a consuming fire* (Heb. 12:29).

2. Theological Definitions.

a. **Westminster Catechism:** — "God is a Spirit, Infinite, Eternal, and Unchangeable in His Being, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness and Truth."

b. **Augustus Strong:** — "God is the Infinite and Perfect Spirit, The Source of all things, the Support of all things, the End of all things."

c. **Andrew Fuller:** — "God is the First Cause and Last End of all things."

d. **Ebrards:** — "God is the Eternal Source of all that is temporal."

B. Spirituality of God.

1. **His Essence.** He is a Spiritual Being (*God is a Spirit* — John 4:24), invisible (*Who is the image of the invisible God* — Col. 1:15a). What is a spirit? A spirit is a being without flesh and bones. *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have* (Luke 24:39). A spirit has a body, a spirit-body; but it has no natural body, no material body. God cannot be seen by human eye. God, in His pure essence, has never been seen. *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him* (John 1:18).

2. **His Manifestations.** While God, in His true essence, has never been seen, yet He hath shown Himself, revealed His Person to man in different forms. The Scriptures ask, *To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One* (Is. 40:25). Man cannot know God *but* in the way He has revealed Himself. Are we not glad that God has revealed Himself in His Son?

Yet, in some places it says that people saw God: *The LORD spake unto Moses face to face* (Ex. 33:11); *Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel* (Ex. 24:9, 10). In other places the Word says that it is impossible to see God: *He said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live* (Ex. 33:20). The truth is, man has never looked upon the face of God in His true essence, but has looked upon His face and spoken mouth to mouth with God when God manifested Himself in some form other than His true essence. *With him will I speak mouth to mouth* (Num. 12:8a).

We do know this, that the Holy Spirit can manifest Himself, in a visible form. *John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him* (John 1:32). It was at the Lord Jesus' baptism that John saw the form, but not the Spirit; yet the Spirit was manifested.

God has manifested Himself in many forms; among them are the following:

a. **In Creature Forms.** By this we do not mean that the LORD appeared in the form of human beings. Genesis 3:8 and 12:7 illustrate this fully: *They heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden* (Gen. 3:8); *The LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I*

give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him (Gen. 12:7). See also Genesis 18:7,10,13; Exodus 24:9-11; Genesis 18:1-16; Judges 13:22,23; Genesis 32:24-30.

God also manifested Himself as the Angel of the LORD— *The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them* (Ps. 34:7); *The angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction* (Gen. 16:11). It is believed that the Angel of the LORD is none other than the Lord Jesus Himself.

b. In Material Forms. Man could not see God, therefore God manifested Himself in forms from which He spoke and from which He led him. One such form was the Burning Bush: *When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I* (Ex. 3:4). Another was the Pillar of Cloud and Fire: *The LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night* (Ex. 13:21).

c. In The Person of Christ Jesus. Again we state that we are rejoicing that God does not choose today to reveal Himself other than in His Son, Jesus Christ! God does not manifest Himself in a vapor, but rather in *human* form: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth* (John 1:1,14). See also I Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:3.

C. Personality of God.

God is a Person, One possessing Self-consciousness, Self-determination, and Power. People have many vague ideas of God as a force, a power, an influence. But it is impossible to have fellowship with a force or an influence. The Words of Christ as He was in the Garden show that God is One with whom we can have fellowship: *Now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves* (John 17:13). See also Exodus 3:14; I Corinthians 2:11.

The personality of God can; be seen:

1. In Names. *God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said. Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you* (Ex. 3:14). The words *I AM THAT I AM* speak of personality.

2. In Contrasts. By this we mean that the Scriptures contrast the only wise God with the gods of the pagans: *Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God* (I Thess. 1:9). See also Jeremiah 10:16; Acts 14:15.

3. In Attributes. That which is characteristic of God is called an attribute. That which He *does*, denotes personality, such as:

a. God Grieves. Only a person can grieve: *It repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart* (Gen. 6:6).

b. God Repents. In the above Scripture (Gen. 6:6) we note that God repents. I Samuel 15:29 says: *The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.* Here one portion of the Scriptures states that God repents, another declares that He does not repent. Is this a contradiction? When man repents, he repents of some moral deed; when God repents, He repents of a judicial act. God's attitude toward sin never changes. Take the case of Jonah and Nineveh. Nineveh repented; it changed its mind; it changed its character. God, however, did not change His mind; He did not change His attitude toward sin. But inasmuch as

Nineveh had repented, there was no need for judgment against sin. Nineveh's sin had been confessed and forgiven.

c. God Loves. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life* (John 3:16). *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent* (Rev. 3:19). Only a personality can love.

d. God Hates. *These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him* (Prov. 6:16).

e. God Hears. *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know* (Ps. 94:9,10)?

4. In Acts.

a. God Creates. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth* (Gen. 1:1). See also Isaiah 45:18.

b. God Provides. These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. *That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth* (Ps. 104:27-30). The material needs of this entire world are met and supplied by God.

c. God Promotes. Some people seemingly are pushed ahead of others. The world has a name for this — luck. But the correct answer is the LORD! Kings receive their power from Him; pastors receive their charges from Him; husbands receive their wives from Him. All promotions are from the Lord. *Promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another* (Ps. 75:6,7).

d. God Cares. God has a heart; only a person has a heart. God has concern: *Humble yourselves . . . casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you* (I Peter 5:6,7).

D. The Trinity of God.

1. Trinity in Personality. By this, of course, we mean that God is Three in One. There are some errors concerning the Trinity; some have been proposed ignorantly, and others deliberately.

We know that the Bible is the Word of God, if for no other reason than that we have the Trinity in it. If man had written the Bible, he would have left the Trinity out, for it is far too difficult to understand — the mind of man cannot comprehend it. The only thing that the child of God can do is to accept it by faith and stand upon what God says about it. While we cannot seem to comprehend it, yet the Trinity is a doctrine of pure revelation that we can believe with all our heart.

There is an error which proposes that God is three Gods. But that would be polytheism. Another error is that the Trinity is only one Person, manifesting Himself in three. That is, there are three essences in one Person, Jesus Christ, The Father and the Holy Spirit are only manifestations.

Still another, and damnable heresy, denies the Trinity altogether, and makes the Son and Holy Spirit merely creatures of God who came into existence later. They hold that there was a time when the Son of God did not exist. They say: "A son cannot be as old as his father — a father always has to exist before his son in order to beget him; God is the Father of the Son of God; therefore, the Father had to exist before the Son in order to beget Him." To this we reply: "If a person should declare that he is a

father, and has been one for ten years, then we know that he has had a child for ten years. A man cannot be a father without having a child. Even so in the Godhead — if God is the *Eternal* Father, then He must have had an *Eternal* Son."

It is impossible to give examples of the Trinity. Some have offered the three-leaved clover as an illustration. Others have suggested water: in its natural state, liquid; when heated, vapor; when frozen, solid. Or, man himself: as body, soul and spirit. Or, when the sunshine breaks upon the earth it is composed of three elements: heat rays, which can be felt but not seen; light rays, which can be seen, but not felt; chemical rays, which cannot be seen, nor felt, but do have effects. But all such attempts fall far short. God is Three and yet He is One. Three Persons, One Godhead. This, because the Bible teaches it, is a matter for faith rather than explanation.

a. Old Testament Names.

(1) Plural Nouns. *In the beginning God [Elohim] created the heaven and earth* (Gen. 1:1). Elohim is the plural noun, meaning three or more. This points clearly to the Trinity. See also Genesis 3:5; Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 13:2, 3. Elohim is translated in the singular when referring to the True God, and plural when used of false gods.

(2) Plural Pronouns. *The LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever . . .* (Gen. 3:22). See also Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 6:8. This is God speaking to God — thus the Trinity.

(3) Scriptural Statements. The Scriptures state that God anointed God; how could this be if God were not a Trinity? *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows* (Ps. 45:6,7). See also Hebrews 1:8-12; Psalm 110:1.

(4) Scriptural Designations. That is, in Genesis 1:1 God declares that He created the heavens and the earth, and in verse 2, the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, is singled out: *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* (See also Job 26:13). And, elements of personality are accounted for by reference to the Holy Spirit: *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD"* (Is. 11:1,2).

The Son, the Second Person of the Trinity is singled out also: *I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. . . Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way . . .* (Ps. 2:7,12a). The Angel of the LORD of the Old Testament is none other than Jesus Christ Himself, and in the following portion of Scriptures He is declared as being separate from God the Father and Holy Spirit: *The angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water . . . in the way to Shur* (Gen. 16:7).

Further OT Scriptures clearly reveal the Trinity of the Godhead: Genesis 18:1,2,33; 19:24; Isaiah 44:6; 48:16; 63:8-10; Hos. 1:7.

(5) Triple Expressions. Whenever the Scriptures express praise or benediction of the Godhead, a triple exclamation is declared which points to the fact that as God is the Three-In-One these expressions must also be three: *1. The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: 2. the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: 3. the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace* (Num. 6:24-26). *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were*

full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come (Rev. 4:8).

b. New Testament Disclosures.

(1) Baptism of Christ. The baptism of Christ is a powerful illustration of the Trinity: *Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying. This is my beloved Son, in whom, I am well pleased (Matt. 3:16, 17).* Here there is presented the Father in heaven, the Son in the water, and the Holy Spirit descending as a dove.

(2) Baptismal Formula. The Church of God in Christ Jesus has always used that formula laid down by its Founder Himself, Jesus Christ: *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost . . . (Matt 28:19,20).* Note that the Scriptures do not say, "in the names of"; but, "in the name of." One in Three; one name, but three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(3) Apostolic Benediction. The Church has used this benediction (which was first used by the Apostle Paul by inspiration of the Holy Spirit) for the last nineteen hundred years: *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen (II Cor. 13:14).*

(4) Three Persons Mentioned Together. *The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you (John 14:26).* See also: John 14:16,17; 15:26; 16:7,8,13; Eph. 2:18; I John 5:7.

2. Unity of Being: Undivided and Invisible. There is *one* God; He is the one and only God: *Thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears (II Sam. 7:22).* *Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he (Is. 41:4).* See also Isaiah 43:10,11; 44:6; Deuteronomy 6:4.

God — Elohim — is a compound unity; that is, the noun, God (which is plural), is used always with a singular verb: *In the beginning God [plural] created [singular] the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1).* *The LORD [singular] God [plural] of gods, the LORD [singular] God [plural] of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD [singular], save us not this day . . . (Josh. 22:22).* See also Genesis 1:5,8,13; 33:20.

3. A Scriptural Summary.

a. Three Are Recognized as God.

(1) The Father is Recognized as God. *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:7).* See also John 6:27; I Peter 1:21.

(2) The Son is Recognized as God. *Unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom (Heb. 1:8).* *We should live soberly, righteously, and godly . . . looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2:12,13).*

(3) The Holy Spirit is Recognized as God. *Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God (Acts 5:3, 4).*

b. Three Are Described as Distinct Persons.

(1) Father and Son Are Persons Distinct From Each Other.

(a) Christ Distinguishes the Father From Himself. *As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man (John 5:26,27).* See also John 5:32.

(b) Father and Son are Distinguished as the Begetter and the Begotten. *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son . . . (John 3:16).* As the Eternal Son in past eternity, Christ in prospect took upon Himself creature form. As such, while He was always *the image of the invisible God*, He became *the firstborn of every creature* (Col. 1:16); and *the beginning of the creation of God* (Rev. 3:14). The term “begotten” encompasses this.

(c) Father and Son are Distinguished as the Sender and the Sent. *When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law (Gal 4:4).* See also John 10:36.

(2) Father and Son Are Persons Distinguished from the Holy Spirit.

(a) The Son Distinguishes the Holy Spirit From Himself and the Father. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you (John 14:16,17).*

(b) The Spirit Proceeds From the Father. *When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me (John 15:26).*

(c) The Spirit Is Sent by the Father and the Son. *The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you (John 14:26).* See again *When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me (John 15:26).*

c. These Three Persons Are Equal. *The Father* is not God as such, for God is Father, Son and Holy Ghost. *The Son* is not God as such, for God is Father, Son and Holy Ghost. *The Holy Ghost* is not God as such, for God is Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

E. The Self-existence of God.

Existence of God is within Himself. We are dependent upon Him; He is not dependent upon anything. Something caused us to be; nothing caused Him to be. He always was. God does not exist because He brought Himself into existence. God exists because it is His nature to be.

Our lives come from an external source; there was a time when we began. *I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me (John 5:36).* We cannot say this.

F. The Infinity of God.

Divine nature has no limit or bound. *Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite (Ps. 147:5).* *Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the*

earth, and broader than the sea (Job 11:7-9). Will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? (I Kings 8:27). O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (Rom. 11:33). See also Isaiah 66:1; Psalm 113:5, 6.

The world is a bud from His bower of beauty — The sun is a spark from the light of His wisdom — The sky is a bubble on the sea of His power.

IV. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The attributes of God are the essential qualities of a perfect Being — the property of God.

A. The Omnipotence of God.

This means that God is all-powerful, all mighty: *I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying. Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth (Rev. 19:6). Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible (Matt 19:26). Is anything too hard for the LORD? (Gen. 18:14a). There is only one thing which can limit God, and that is His own holy will.*

1. God Has Power Over Nature. *By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast (Ps. 33:6-9). Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land (Hag. 2:6). See also Genesis 1:1-3; Nahum 1:3-6. Man has to have tools to make things — God only has to speak, and it is done.*

2. God Has Power Over Men. *There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For what ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that (Jas. 4:12-15). See also Exodus 4:11.*

3. God Has Power Over Angels. *All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (Dan. 4:35).*

4. God Has Power Over Satan. In Job 1:12; 2:6 we notice that Satan is subjected to God; *The LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD. . . . And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. And we know of the end of Satan from the following Scriptures: The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly . . . (Rom. 16:20a); He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. . . . And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. 20:2,10). See also Luke 22:31,32.*

5. God Has Power Over Death. Paul prays that the Ephesians may know *what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead,*

and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come (Eph. 1:19-21). Ultimately, death shall be destroyed: *Death and hell [hades] were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death* (Rev. 20:14).

B. The Omniscience of God.

Omniscience means "all knowing." God is the "All-Knowing God" —He knows everything! *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things* (I John 3:20).

1. Includes All Nature. God, the Creator, knows everything concerning His creatures.

a. Of His Inanimate Creatures. *He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names* (Ps. 147:4). *Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding* (Is. 40:28).

b. Of His Brute Creatures. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father* (Matt 10:29).

c. Of His Human Creatures. God has full knowledge of man: *Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him* (Matt 6:8). He knows man's need. He knows the very thoughts of man *Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off* (Ps. 139:2). *The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity* (Ps. 94:11). See also I Chronicles 28:9 and Hebrews 4:13. God knows the heart of man: *Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men* (I Kings 8:39). See also Psalm 44:21 and Acts 1:24. God knows the experiences we have gone through: *The LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows* (Ex. 3:7). How absurd for man to try to deceive God!

2. Covers All Time. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world* (Acts 15:18). And this covers the past, the present and the future. The Past can God see, for He has given to us those things which have happened millenniums ago (Book of Genesis); the Present is an open book to Him: *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do* (Heb. 4:13); and the Future is known as the past and present is known. He knows the end from the beginning: *Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you* (I Peter 1:20). I Kings 13:2 is also a marvellous illustration of God knowing the future: a baby was named three hundred years before it was born, its name given, from, what family it was to come and the things it was to do in later life: *And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.* See also Isaiah 44:28; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15,16; Exodus 3:19; Daniel 2:8. With God knowing the future, we must put ourselves in His hands.

3. Includes All Possibilities. Only God knows what would have happened if something had happened which did not happen. *Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted*

unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day (Matt 11:23). See also I Samuel 23:12; Isaiah 48:18.

C. The Omni-sapience of God.

By this we mean the "All-Wisdom of God"; that is, God has all wisdom. There is a vast difference in wisdom and knowledge. Knowledge is what one knows; wisdom is the perfect display of that knowledge. Wisdom includes discernment and judgment.

1. Choice of The Highest End. All things are chosen which will bring about the highest end for God's glory.

2. Best Way of Securing That End. Here wisdom asserts itself, not only choosing that which will bring about the highest end, but devising the best ways of securing that end. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out* (Rom. 11:33). See also Romans 16:27; I Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:8; 3:10; I Timothy 1:17.

D. The Omnipresence of God.

There are many vague ideas concerning the omnipresence of God. "Omnipresent" simply means everywhere present. God is everywhere present. God is everywhere, but He is not in everything. The belief that He is in everything is Pantheism. If God were in everything, then all man would have to do would be to bow down to a stone, a tree, a table, any object, and he would be worshiping God. God is not in everything, but He is everywhere! He is everywhere present. The best illustration of this is of a teacher before his class. The teacher is omnipresent to every student in that classroom; but he is not omnipresent to those on the outside, nor to those in the basement, nor even to those who are in the next room. Why? Because the walls, floors and space are barriers between him and those in other parts of the building. But God transcends *all* barriers — space, materials, all things.

We believe, however, that there is a certain place where He manifests Himself, where He is located — and from that locality He is present to everything of the universe. *Hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive* (I Kings 8:30). See also Jeremiah 23:24; Ephesians 1:20; Revelation 21:2.

While God's dwelling place is in heaven, yet we do know that He has manifested Himself in other places: on earth, as when He dwelt in the burning bush (Ex. 3:4): *When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I; and in the flesh, in the incarnation' of Jesus Christ: *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross* (Phil 2:5-8).*

The Holy Spirit is everywhere. He is in believers: *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you* (John 14:16,17). He is with the unbelievers: *Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I*

depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:7,8).

God is with us no matter where we are; He is omnipresent; He is everywhere present!

E. The Eternity of God.

This is one thing which has never been grasped by the human mind: God is without beginning and without ending. He is the Eternal Now! He is the only One who is. There is no past, and there is no future in eternity. God is eternal; therefore, there is no past nor future with God. *I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end (Ps. 102:24-27).* See also Psalm 90:4.

Some one may ask, "What is the difference between Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1?" Genesis 1:1 says: *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* John 1:1 says: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* Are both "beginnings" the same? If so, then the Word, Jesus Christ, had a beginning! Both passages start at the same point—the beginning; Genesis 1:1 begins with the beginning and looks forward into eternity; while John 1:1 begins with the beginning and looks backward into eternity. Therefore, the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, had no beginning.

F. The Immutability of God.

This means the "unchangeableness of God.". His Being, attitude and acts are without change; *I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed (Mal 3:6).* *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (Jas. 1:17).* *God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath (Heb. 6:17).*

For a discussion of the repentance of God see III, C, 3, b.

G. The Love of God.

1. Its Citation. *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him (I John 4:8-16).*

This is the one definition of God. There are many adjectives defining God, but a noun needs a noun. The love of God comes from revelation. It does not come by one's own knowledge. It cannot be seen in nature. Only from God's Word comes the knowledge that God is love. There are those who deny the inspiration of the Scriptures, but who still say that God is love. If the Scriptures are not the Word of God, how do we know that God is love? You can search the world over and never find a "God is love" among the heathen. They have their gods and idols, but a God that is "God is love" is unknown to them. The Bible is the Word of God - it, and it only, tells us that "God is love."

2. Its Objects. If God is love, then that love must be directed to someone. And it is, for we learn from the Scriptures that the objects of His love are:

a. His Son. God loves His Son more than man could ever love his own offspring. *Lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (Matt. 3:17). See also Matthew 17:5. God's love is a perfect love and transcends all bounds: *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world* (John 17:24).

b. Believers. All who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are the objects of God's divine love. He manifests that love day by day. *The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God* (John 16:27). *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me* (John 17:23).

c. Israel. Be careful how you speak of the "lowly" Jew. He is the object of God's love, the same as we Christians: *The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee* (Jer. 31:3).

d. Sinners. God never changes concerning His attitude toward sin. God hates sin, but loves the sinner: *God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)* (Eph. 2:4, 5). *When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us* (Rom. 5:6-8).

3. Its Manifestations.

a. In the Gift of His Son for Sinful Man. *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him* (I John 4:9). See also John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8.

Man cannot look upon Calvary and say, "God does not love me." God gave His Only Son to sin — to pay for sin, to pay for the sins of sinners! Yes, we may see our children in the throes of death, but God saw His Son suffer as no man ever did. The dearest child on earth is only a stranger compared with the love of God toward His Son. God points toward Calvary and says, "See my Son! See Him mocked, smitten and bruised". God saw Him. God saw sinners as they crucified His Son. God could have removed them from off the face of the earth, but He did not. The nails that pierced His Son pierced the heart of the Father. We can never understand it: *For God so loved the world, that He gave . . .* The Father gave Him up to the hands of justice to pay for our sins.

Many a murderer has had to pay with his life for his crime. Jesus was delivered up to pay for our crimes of sin.

b. In Giving Life and Position In Christ. To believers only is given that sacred position — in Christ; there is where we are — saved, and uncondemned. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is* (I John 3:2): *Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus* (Eph. 2:5,6).

c. In Granting That We Should Be Called the Children of God. *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not (I John 3:1). For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26).*

d. In Chastening of His Loved Ones. *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby (Heb. 12:6-11). Remember, the chastening of the Lord is for our benefit — for our profit. We need chastisement; it is a must in the life of the Christian; and we receive it from our Father in Heaven.*

e. In Remembering His Children in All Circumstances of Life. *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Is it possible that a mother could ever leave her child? The answer is, Yea, they may forget. In our own lifetime we have witnessed the desertion of children by their parents. But listen to the rest of the passage: Yet will I not forget thee (Is. 49:15). There is One who will never desert His children!*

f. In Rejoicing Over the Return of the Prodigal Son. This great story is found in Luke 15:11-24. It is the story of a *Son*, not a sinner. A sinner is not a son. Only a son is a son and you cannot un-son a son. A son is born a son forever. But here was a son who sank so low that the testimony he might have had was lost. Remember, he was still a son, and as much so while feeding swine as he was in his Father's house. Relationship was still there, but fellowship was broken. You can lose fellowship, but you cannot lose sonship. He made up his mind what he would say to his father upon his return, but he did not get the chance. He did say, *I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;* but before he could add, *Make me as one of thy hired servants,*" the Father, holding his son in his arms, cried to the servants, *Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found (Luke 15:21-24).*

Let the prodigal know that if he has been once born from above he is still God's child. Only let him resolve to "arise and go" to his Father. The Father stands with open arms ready to plant His kiss upon the penitent lips of His wayward child. "Arise and go".

4. The Forms of God's Love.

a. In the Goodness of God.

(1) As Manifested in Creation. *God saw . . . that it was good.* This is characteristic of the first chapter of Genesis. God is good, and all things that He creates and makes are for the good of man.

(2) As Manifested In His Care of Brute Creation. *The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing (Ps. 145:15,16).*

(3) As Manifested In the Variety of Pleasure for His Creatures. Why all the beauty of nature, if not to be enjoyed by the eye of man?

(4) As Manifested in the Gift of His Son. This proves the goodness of God — that God is good.

(5) As Manifested In Allowing Sinners to Repent. *Despise thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* (Rom. 2:4).

b. In the Loving-kindness of God. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* (Rom. 8:32). Since God has given us the Greatest Gift — His Son — we can be assured that we shall be given "the wrappings" with it. The Son is the Gift, and the wrappings are "things" of His supply which make our souls happy.

c. In the Long-suffering of God. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance* (II Peter 3:9). *The LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth* (Ex. 34:6). See also Numbers 14:18.

How many of us praise the Lord that the Saviour gave us "time" in trusting Him for our salvation? Oh, the long-suffering of God which is manifested toward us, in that we were able to hear the Gospel twice, when there are millions who have never heard it once!

d. In the Patience of God. *Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus* (Rom. 15:5). Here we note that the patience of God is a divine title, for He is the God of patience! This is clearly manifested in:

(1) His Dealings With Sinners: Those Before the Flood. *Which sometime were disobedient when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water* (I Peter 3:20). The Lord demonstrated His patience for at least a hundred years. As long as the ark was a preparing, the Gospel was preached — the people warned. His patience was exhausted, finally, and the flood carried the unbelievers away. It will be the same with the coming of the Son of Man at His revelation, at the end of the Tribulation. All those who are found not to be in the Ark, Jesus Christ, shall be destroyed.

(2) His Dealings With Israel. *And yet for all that [Israel's sin], when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD* (Lev. 28:44,45).

Israel today is Godless, and by this we do not mean that Israel is worse than any other nation, but simply that it is without God. Jehovah has sent prophets unto her, but she has stoned them. He sent even His Son, and Him they crucified. They have been driven unto the uttermost parts of the earth because of it. Yet, for all of this, God has shown His patience, and that patience shall be rewarded, for that nation shall be born anew in a day, and all Israel (those alive at the time of the Revelation of Jesus Christ) shall be saved!

(3) His Dealings With the World Today. Why does not God strike today? Why are men allowed to blaspheme the God of heaven and His Son Jesus Christ? The answer is found in the patience of God.

H. The Mercy of God.

1. As To Its Citation. *For the LORD thy God is a merciful God; he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them (Deut 4:31). The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. ... But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children (Ps.103:8,17). God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us ... hath quickened us together with Christ (Eph. 2:4,5). See also Psalms 130:7; 145:8; 136:1.*

2. As To Its Explanation. There is very little difference in the meaning of mercy and grace. Mercy, generally speaking, is used in the Old Testament, and grace in the New Testament. Old Testament mercy and loving-kindness go together. Some one has said that mercy is negative, and loving-kindness is positive. Mercy is shown to the disobedient, and loving-kindness is showered upon the obedient — both together mean grace.

3. As To Its Manifestation.

a. In Pardoning the Sinner. *Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief (I Tim. 1:13).*

b. In Removing the Guilt and Penalty. *He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us (Ps. 103:10-12).*

c. In Delivering the Periled. *Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake (Ps. 6:4).*

d. In Saving Its Object. Luke 10:33-37 records the parable of the Good Samaritan. After He has told the parable Jesus asks, *Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?* And the answer came: *He that shewed mercy on him.* There can be no doubt but that Jesus Christ is typified by the Good Samaritan, and it is He who saves, through His mercy, the objects of His concern.

L. The Grace of God.

1. As To Its Citation. *According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:5-7). In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (Eph. 1:7). The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you (I Peter 5:10). See also IICorinthians 6:1.*

2. As To Its Explanation. Grace is said to be undefinable. Grace always flows down. We might be able to love our equal, or one above our equal, or sometimes one below our equal, but look at the vast difference between God and us; there can be no comparison. The grace of God toward us is unmerited favour.

3. As to Its Manifestation.

a. Grace Justifies. Grace declares the saint to be righteous: *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* (Rom. 3:23,24).

b. Grace Imputes Righteousness. This means, that by the act of God's grace, the righteousness of God is put to the account of the believing sinner. *Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness* (Rom. 4:4,5).

c. Grace Imparts a New Nature. *By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them* (Eph. 2:8-10).

d. Grace Saves. Why should God save us? The only answer is *grace!* *By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God* (Eph. 2:8).

e. Grace Instructs. *The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world* (Titus 2:11,12).

J. The Faithfulness of God.

Unfaithfulness is the greatest sin of today. This is true in every walk of life, whether in business, church, or state. But we have a God who is faithful at all times, under every circumstance. The Word bears out the faithfulness of God by the following:

1. Citation. Many Scriptures point out the faithfulness of God: *Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations* (Deut 7:9). *God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord* (I Cor. 1:9). *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it* (I Cor. 10:13). See also Deuteronomy 32:4; I Thessalonians 5:24; II Thessalonians 3:3; I John 1:9.

2. Explanation. The meaning of "faithfulness" is stay, lean, prop, support, God is our support; He it is upon whom we can lean; when we are faltering. He is our Prop — at all times!

3. Manifestation. How does God prove faithful?

a. In Keeping His Promise. *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.... For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry* (Heb. 10:23,36,37). The promise of the virgin-born son in Isaiah 7:9 is fulfilled in Luke 1:26-38; 2:7. The promise of God to Abraham in Genesis 15:13, that his seed would go to Egypt and stay there for four hundred years, is fulfilled in Exodus 12:41. See also these other Scriptures: Deuteronomy 7:9; I Kings 8:23,24,56.

b. In Preserving His People. Take Lamentations 3:22,23 with Jeremiah 51:5 and you can see that once a people become God's people, they are His forever. That is because God is faithful: *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness* (Lam. 3:22,23). *Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the LORD of hosts: though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel* (Jer. 51:5). Other

Scripture bears out the faithfulness of God in preserving His people: *Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him well doing, as unto a faithful Creator* (I Peter 4:19). See Psalm 89:20-26; II Timothy 2:13.

c. In Chastening His Children. God is faithful in carrying out the discipline He has promised to His wayward children. *I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me* (Ps. 119:75). Correction is needed when we disobey our Lord, and we can always count on the faithfulness of God in providing this. *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth* (Heb. 12:6).

d. In Forgiving Our Sins. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* (I John 1:9).

e. In Answering Our Prayers. How do we know that our prayers will be answered? God commands us to pray to Him without ceasing. How do we know that it will do any good? We know that God answers our prayers, because the faithfulness of God guarantees that His ears will always be opened to the cries of His children: *Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness* (Ps. 143:1).

4. Applications.

a. It will preserve us from worry.

b. It will check our murmuring.

c. It will increase confidence in God.

K. The Holiness of God.

While we mention the holiness of God as the last of God's attributes, let us never forget that it is not the least at all. Consider first:

1. Natural Holiness. This is called the fundamental attribute, and is one attribute by which God wants His people to remember Him. This is declared to be the most important of all of God's attributes. We know why they make such a statement.

Among God's attributes, holiness is named most often in the Scriptures. God is called holy more times in the Scriptures; His holiness is mentioned more than His might. Holiness is indeed the "attribute of attributes." When we think not of God's holiness, we think light of sin. We are living in the day of compromise, when people hold light views. It is hard to get people to consider their lost condition and the peril of hell ahead. They think lightly of salvation, because they have a light view of God's holiness:

Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? (Ex.15:11). *I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy* (Lev. 11:44,45). *Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory* (Is. 6:2,3). *Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones* (Is. 57:15). *I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are* (John 17:11). *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are*

sealed unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). See also Leviticus 19:1,2; Joshua 24:19; Psalms 22:1-3; 99:5,9; I Peter 1:15,16.

2. Aspects of Holiness. By this we mean that of which holiness is composed.

a. Purity.

(1) Its Citation. *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5).*

(2) Its Explanation. In Him is light. In Him is no darkness. Light is always pure. There is no such thing as dirty light. God is Light — pure, free from defilement. There are two phases of purity: negative, free from all that defiles; positive, pure. God in His holiness is pure: free from all that defiles, and pure in essence.

b. Righteousness. This is another element of holiness.

(1) Its Citation. *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he (Deut 32:4). Righteous art thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? (Jer. 12:1). O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou has sent me (John 17:25).*

(2) Its Explanation. The formula for righteousness is found in Ezekiel 18:5,9: *If a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God.* God is always right. He possesses character that makes Him do everything right. Righteousness always requires that which is right in character. God never asks anything that is not right. God never commands that which will make us do wrong.

c. Justice.

(1) Its Citation. *The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame (Zeph. 3:5).* See also Deuteronomy 32:4.

(2) Its Explanation. The Greek and Hebrew words for justice mean the same. Righteousness is the legislative demand of God — the demand for holiness. Justice is judicial holiness — that judicial act of God which demands the penalty for those who have not measured up to the righteous demands of God. Justice, judicial holiness, governs those who are judged, and brings about the execution of those who do not carry out God's laws. Justice is the Executor of those who wrong God's holy commands. Man's justice is sometimes wrong, but God's justice is always right — thus holiness!

d. Truth of God.

(1) Its Citation. *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. ... All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies (Ps. 25:5,10). God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? (Num. 23:19). In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began (Titus 1:2).* See also: Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 31:5; 86:15.

(2) Its Explanation. That which God has revealed to man in His Word is Eternal Truth. God never contradicts Himself. One portion of His Word never contradicts another. The Word of God always stands in contrast to the erroneous theories of the past and present.

3. Manifestation of God's Holiness.

a. By His Works. Everything that God has created and made is perfect, holy. God did not create sin. God did not create the sinful nature which is in the unsaved man. God created man who has sinned. Man, by sinning, has passed on to his offspring a perverted nature, that Adamic nature, or as we have called it, that "sinful" nature. Yes, God created man who was capable of sinning. If God had created man so that man could not have sinned, then He would have made a machine rather than a being with a free will. And if God had created man so that man could not sin and yet was not a machine, man would not only have been like God, but he would have, been God Himself. God does not make God. Man is inferior to God. God cannot sin; that is His nature. Man would be God if he could not have sinned

b. By His Laws. All the laws are right - they are truth. There is not a single untruth in the whole of God's laws. Thus God's laws manifest God's holiness.

c. By His Hatred of Sin. Do you know one reason why fellow Christians are tolerant toward the sins of another, or toward the sins of the unbelievers? It is because they do not hate sin as God hates it. Often we say that God hates sin, but He does not hate the sinner. That is not true. God does hate the sinner; *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity* (Ps. 5:5). This may be a revelation to some of us. God hates the sinner because of his sin, and not because of himself. God hates the sinner, but He loves him, too, because He knows that man is capable of holiness, although ruined by sin. Why does God punish the sinner? Because of the sinner's sins! God thus hates sin, no matter where it may be found, whether in the life of an unregenerate sinner, or in the life of His own believer. God's attitude and conduct toward sin reveal the holiness of God.

d. By His Love of Righteousness. God loves righteousness as much as He hates sin: *Hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness* (I Kings 8:32). *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. ... For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister* (Heb. 1:9; 6:10).

e. By His Justification of the Believing Sinner. If man had his "rights," he would be in hell; but it is the mercy and grace of God which offers him the plan of salvation, which if he receives declares the believing sinner to be righteous: *God hath set [Christ Jesus] forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus* (Rom. 3:25,26).

f. By His Care of His Saints. *The LORD executeth righteousness and, judgment for all that are oppressed* (Ps.103:6). *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me. The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows. The LORD is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked* (Ps. 129:1-4). See also: Psalm 98:1-3; 145:15-19; II Timothy 1:6-9.

g. By His Cross. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* (Ps. 22:1). We can catch a glimpse of the Cross by reading the quoted verse and the remaining verses of Psalm 22. This Psalm is, of course, prophetic, spoken or written some nine hundred years before Christ actually died upon the Cross of Calvary. And Christ's death is a perfect manifestation of God's holiness. Some, no doubt, will ask how this

could be. We know that God hates sin: therefore, when His Son was *made sin for us, who knew no sin*, yea, when even God's Son became sin, God's attitude toward sin did not vary. God hated sin as much as ever, even when He made His Son sin. His Son did not change His view at all. Jesus, therefore, became hated of the Father because of sin. Jesus never became a sinner, but He became sin. And as God hated sin: *It pleased the LORD to bruise him* (Is. 53:10a). God forsook His Son, for God will always forsake sin. God's holiness did not change.

V. THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

God is called the Father because of the association with Him. Popularity of the term "Father" is due to Christianity. There is no such thing as God being a Father in heathenism — this can be found only in Christianity. Today there are many fancies concerning the Fatherhood of God. The teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man is nothing but Universalism: which teaches that all are God's children and no one will ever be sent to hell. The Universalist reasons that God will never send any of His children to hell — and that is true: He will not send any of His children to hell — but not all men are the children of God. The Scripture which the Universalists use to preach that God is the Father of all mankind is Ephesians 4:6: *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*. But this means all Christians, all believers, not the unbelievers nor the unregenerated.

A. Old Testament Teaching.

Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting. . . . Now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand (Is. 63:16; 64:8).

God is mentioned in the Old Testament as a Father, but not the Father of the individual. Rather, the emphasis is His being the Father of the nation Israel.

B. New Testament Teaching.

The Lord Jesus is the One who introduced God as the Father of the individual. He does this first though by declaring God to be His own Father. *The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth* (John 1:14). *Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God* (John 5:17,18). *My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God* (John 10:29-33). *They took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me* (John 11:41).

1. In That God is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The expression, as we use it, "the Fatherhood of God," does not mean that God lived for a long time and then begat His Son. God, remember, is the eternal Father —and to be an eternal Father, He must have an eternal Son. The term "son" in Scripture does not always mean a son by generation; it may also mean a son by relationship. Take the Old Testament Scriptures: *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a*

virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (Is. 7:14); and: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6). Notice the child and the son. The child is born; the Son is not born, but given. Yes, that Babe in Bethlehem was born, but that Life was the Son who has been forever. The Babe had a beginning; the Son had no beginning. He has existed always, from eternity, with the Father. Thus, Christ is the Son, not by generation (by birth), but by relation. He is related to the Father and the Holy Spirit; all together are related to each other, and thus compose the Godhead. God could not be God without all members of the Godhead being present from eternity throughout eternity.

In order for God to become flesh, He had to be born as any other man; thus, He manifested Himself in His Son, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit: *The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35). When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law (Gal. 4:4).*

a. The Father Recognizes Jesus as His Own Son. *Lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matt 3:17). There came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him (Luke 9:35).*

b. The Son Recognises God as His Own Father. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him (Matt 11:27). I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me (Luke 22:29). These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee (John 17:1).*

c. Men Recognize Jesus as God's Own Son. *Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt 16:16). I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. . . . Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel (John 1:34,49).*

d. Demons Recognize Jesus as God's Own Son. *Behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Matt 8:29).*

2. In That God is the Father of Believers On the Lord Jesus Christ. *There is ... one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Eph. 4:6). We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that God is not the Father of all mankind. He is only the Father of born-again children of God. All men are the creatures of God, but not all are children of God. Man is a creature of God by creation; he becomes a child by re-creation: *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord . . . whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (II Peter 1:2, 4).**

There can be no sonship apart from the spiritual re-birth. A child has *always* the nature of his father. Man, who is born of Adam, has Adam's nature, which is corrupt, which is perverted, which is sinful. And the father of Adam's sinful nature is Satan. The nature of our father (Adam) is the same nature as Adam's father's (Satan); therefore, our nature is the same as Satan's. All unregenerated sinners have Satan as

their father: *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it* (John 8:44). Summing it all up, if Satan is the father of the unsaved by the natural birth, we must have a supernatural birth in order for God to be our Father.

God does not have any fellowship with anything which is of Adam, for Adam is all that is of a sinful condition and nature. God only has to do with His Son. The world is divided into two divisions. In fact, there are only two men whom God recognizes: Adam and Christ; thus, sinners are divided as to their identity with these two men. The unsaved are identified with Adam; the saved are identified with Christ. All men are identified by the natural birth in Adam; born-again men are identified by the supernatural birth in Christ.

The unsaved man can only call God "God." The unsaved man cannot call God "Father." Only the child of God can call God "Father." When the Lord Jesus was hanging on the tree, He called out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Notice that Christ did not cry, "My Father, my Father." but "My God, my God." Why? Because He was taking the sinner's place in death, dying — *the Just for the unjust*. And as He was taking the sinner's place, He could only call God "God."

Where are we, in Adam or in Christ? *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive* (I Cor. 15:22).