

Comprehending the Omnipotent and Ubiquitous Spirit of God

❧ INTRODUCTION ❧

A profound phenomenon began overwhelming the New Testament Church as the third century was drawing to a close. Politically Driven Theological Developments emerged, blending concepts drawn from ancient Paganism and Gnosticism with those drawn from Scripture, structuring the result to accommodate the pre-existing Judaic Monotheistic Belief System. The resulting dogma forever divided the various Christian cults, drawing a curtain over any proper understanding the greater Christian world might hope to have as to the existence of the true God and our stated potential of becoming... “partakers of His Divine Nature”. (2nd Peter 1:4)

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As the early New Testament Church emerged from centuries of intense and deadly persecutions, and considering its significant growth dynamic (at least numerically), the desperate political situation within the Roman Empire gave reason for one of its emperors to realize the unifying potential that religion could offer to his realm.

As the fourth century was underway, the Roman Empire had effectively been split, becoming rival Empires: the west, still based in the city of Rome, and the east, centered in Byzantium, later to be renamed for its new Emperor, Constantine.

Seeking to draw together any political support he could muster, having only recently defeated the forces of his eastern rival, Emperor Maxentius, what greater asset could there be than a unity of custom and faith among the populace, a power that politically and religiously unifies without incorporating a ‘military’ risk. Clever these scheming potentates!

What drew Constantine’s interest was the fast emerging body of ‘believers’ called “Christians”. Not that the growth was entirely of people who were ‘genuine’, that really wasn’t a consideration, nor was it a necessity. Explosive growth was well underway as persecutions eased in the late third

century, but it was a ‘compromise atmosphere’ by that time, where pre-existing cult religions were being ‘christianized’, allowing the masses to be blended into the cult of christianity, as their pre-existing customs and beliefs had been. In effect, customs and beliefs of the Roman religious world were ‘sanitized’ of their former pagan associations, being re-named and re-dedicated to the new god, that of the Christian realm. ¹

Un-Christian in Reality!

A major religious cult of the late Roman Empire had been Mithraism, popular among its military,

¹ “When such conditions prevailed it is easy to understand that many of the emperors yielded to the delusion that they could unite all their subjects in the adoration of the one sun-god who combined in himself the Father-God of the Christians and the much-worshipped Mithras; thus the empire could be founded anew on unity of religion. Even Constantine, as will be shown farther on, for a time cherished this mistaken belief. It looks almost as though the last persecutions of the Christians were directed more against all irreconcilables and extremists than against the great body of Christians. The policy of the emperors was not a consistent one; Diocletian was at first friendly towards Christianity; even its grimmest foe, Julian, wavered. Caesar Constantius, Constantine’s father, protected the Christians during a most cruel persecution.” (The Catholic Encyclopedia)

and containing many beliefs and practices strongly reminiscent of modern 'christian' customs. Not without good reason, and not without effect. Many saw it a simple matter to *profess* conversion as pressures were brought to do so, as so much of what they had previously practiced was obviously represented in this 'new' religion!

But the primary matter of concern to Constantine was the wide-spread and intractable schisms that existed in the various branches of Christianity. In interest of political unity, this would not do! Opposing theological positions were passionately defended, employing every tactic short of bloodshed, involving everything from Judaic customs to Gnostic concepts to what were regarded as true 'Apostolic' views. Christianity itself was hopelessly divided. That didn't lend itself to serving the interests of the unconverted Constantine!

The emperor saw political benefit in resolving Christianity's various theological and practical issues. Not the least in this polarized atmosphere were the positions held relating to 'the nature of God', and, though he was initially persuaded of the concept, as put forth by Doctor Arius (whom we'll meet in a later chapter) he later was persuaded to the view being more convincingly set forth by Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria.²

Though the matter of the nature of Gods' Spirit is the *primary* subject considered in this booklet, we should also remember that other issues were dealt with in this same ecumenical movement, namely the eradication of any vestige of "Jewish" custom (yes, including the Sabbath and the Passover) in favor of Sunday veneration and Easter observance. (What should be apparent in that action is the fact that Sabbath keeping and Holyday observances, (Passover and Pentecost in particular), were still practiced in some congregations of the Church some 300 years after the Day of Pentecost!)

Established Dis-Unity

Though religious UNITY was the ultimate quest,

² You see, Dr. Arias, though accepting His Divinity, took issue with the 'pre-existence' of Christ, alleging that He had no eternal existence with the Father. It should also be noted that the Athanasian view was modified in the late 300's to include a 'third person' idea, something Constantine would not have known, having died in 337.


the hard-won 'resolutions' produced by their efforts, established issues of demarcation which continue to divide the various 'persuasions' existing within Christianity, even to the present day. Nor did their resolutions eliminate differences in their day. Once positions were set forth by official 'creeds', a major one in the year 325AD and subsequently, a generation later, in 381, it required the threat of civil punishment by the Empire to enforce general acceptance and compliance. Such is the nature of 'ecumenism'.

What We Will Examine

In the following chapters we are going to consider our first Biblical introduction to the Spirit of God and its relationship to the Universe. We will see startling declarations of modern physical sciences, Quantum Mechanics in particular, that should broaden our perspective as to what part Gods' Spirit plays in the existence of all things, physical and non-physical, animate and inanimate.

Where the usual theological focus is on the Father and the Son when discussing the Nature of God, we'll instead approach the matter by considering unique aspects of the Nature of Gods' Spirit and the nature of Spirit in general and its application and function in our lives.

We will review what the early Church **originally** understood on these matters as opposed to those theological positions that were later developed. We will also see that a 'third person' was **not** the emphasis in the earliest Councils, but was developed a generation later than the first Council in 325AD. In that the early Church by and large was not even aware of the Trinitarian view, it would have had no impact on the salvation of any believer for at least the first 300-years! Then, why would religion today deem belief in "the Trinity" **essential** to ones' salvation?

We will also see that the Trinitarian view was not universally accepted in the fourth century any more than was the promotion of the day-of-the-sun and prohibitions against "Jewish" Sabbaths, both weekly and annual, nor the incorporation of customs derived from the pagan religions of the day, particularly the Mithraic Cult, into what was being passed off as 'christianity'. 

Spirit and the Universe

Under a Structured Conceptualization of Gods' Holy Spirit as a 'third Person' of a Holy Trinity, we self-impose limits as to the full Dimension of the POWER that Creates and Sustains the Universe, both Material and non-Material, Animate and Inanimate.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." (Gen. 1:1-3) From this most rudimentary text, we're faced with profound considerations.

The Spirit Moved to Divide

Less appreciated than it should be, we are first introduced to a relationship, a direct interaction, between the Spirit of God and one small locale in the vast material Universe. Just a speck in one galaxy! We're made aware in verse 1, that at some point in the infinite past, God had Created the Universe, with the Earth coming into existence, but NOT THEN formed as we know it today. Some six millennia ago, this 'third planet' was re-formed to become a habitable platform to support human life. Vast buried organic deposits and fossilized remains bear evidence that this was not the Earth's first inhabited estate.³ Contorted strata reveal many catastrophic events that occurred in prehistory, including an interplanetary impact that blasted away two-thirds of the Earth's crust, fracturing the remaining crust, allowing its land masses to drift toward their present locations as continents! (A phenomenon unique in the known universe!)

The very first 'act of Creation' (and, as some say, re-creation) by the Power of the Omnipotent God was to excite Energy in such a way so as to create waves that we know as visible light. In the process, dimension was added into infinity, creating the phenomenon known as time. Infinity was divided incrementally. The evening and morning became

³ *And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.* (Jude 6)

the first day.

Light revealed a condition where gaseous waters were indiscriminately intermingled with liquid waters. Molecules apparently did not inter-relate or segregate as they do today. The next act was to divide waters into a distinct gaseous state and a liquid state. The Earth's fluid strata were divided horizontally during an interval identified as the second day.

The next action was to divide the Earth laterally. As is stated in the text, water originally covered the Earth, a fact borne out by massive sedimentary deposits, unexplainable by modern day conditions. Underlying mats of rock were elevated, with the waters running off, congregating where there were greater depths. Thus was created the land platform onto which to place the most amazing manifestation of Spirit: air-breathing physical Life!

In connection with the division of time into days, we are also presented an important illustration: three heavenly phenomena: one which dominates the day, an energy source that sustains life, and another that orbits with the Earth that also is essential to the sustenance of life. Life as we know it would not be possible without the effect the moon has in creating tides in the oceans. A secondary function of these bodies is to amass days, creating congregate divisions in time, causing and defining cycles we know as 'seasons'.

Those actions described next inject into the dead material world a further distinction, dividing the non-living from the living. By the Will of God, life came to be in its many forms, with the supreme division within the living dimensions being the implanting of consciousness into that life form said to be made *in the image and likeness of God!*

Though sustained by and existing within the material dimension, life, and particularly conscious intellect, is sparked by a non-material component. Thus was created the arena for another division, those without and those **with** the Spirit of the Eternal God functioning within!

Sabbath Made for Man

We would be remiss at this point to not mention the seventh day division, one that is reflective of the previous ones. The division of Holy time from unholy time. The sanctification of the seventh day Sabbath, a memorial of the Creation thus far completed, and a reflection of that Creation which is to come: the division that is to be made between the ‘sons of God’ (those begotten children living in light) and those who, as a result of their own choices, are destined to everlasting extinction. In this event, we’re introduced to the circumstance where man participates in the divisional process!

Though long disregarded in the families of man, the seventh day Sabbath is illustrative of a ‘rest’ into which mankind can be allowed entrance.⁴ Those imbued with the Spirit of God are granted an entrance into the ‘spiritual’ rest that is to come with the change in their form of existence, partaking of the Divine Nature, being transferred from a temporary physical existence into the glorious liberty of the ever-living sons of God.⁵

Divided Tongues of Fire

No more graphic illustration of this ‘spiritual’ division exists than the event recorded in Acts chapter 2, verses 1-4. *“And when the day of*

⁴ *“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall **enter into my rest**. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:”* (Heb. 4:1-6)

⁵ *“Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious **liberty** of the children of God.”* (Rom. 8:21)

*Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a **sound** from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there **appeared** unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* Much is made of this unique event in charismatic circles, but in it we are introduced to illustrations of the nature of God’s Spirit that few have made note of. First, without entering into the material dimension, the Holy Spirit was able to excite matter in such a way so as to be audible. There was a powerful sound! Not only audible, but also visible. What appeared as a long tongue of fire, divided and touched each individual present. Though visible, there is no mention of anyone being singed or feeling the heat of these flames.

Spirit for the most part is an unsensible dimension, though like the wind,⁶ its effect can at times be made detectable, when God chooses to do so! As with the Creation account, we can see that the Spirit of God has the power to move mightily upon physical matter, even to create matter from non-existence! (WE say non-existence, in that we exist and think in the physical dimension, overlooking the fact that all exists in and of the limitless and unfathomable Power of God. (Acts 17:28))

Spirit can excite as energy, and energy can be transformed into matter, the second step a phenomenon we’ve called ‘relativity’. Einstein and others recognized that fact, as did the Old Testament writers and even ancient philosophers. (Hebrews 11:3 & Job 38:) (Einstein’s theory: Energy = mass times velocity squared) What our scientific geniuses haven’t yet comprehended is the relationship between spirit power first being converted into energy. There IS one!

When I was in junior high school a half century ago, we students were taught that the atom was the smallest particle of matter that exists. Like little sub-galaxies, electrons orbit a nuclear core made up of protons and neutrons. Incredibly small, bits of matter with large spaces between them, form each atom, of which all matter is formed. More

⁶ John 3:8

recently, it was discovered that, no, there are yet smaller particles, called sub-atomic particles: Each of them replicas of their larger atomic counterparts. They also, composed of tiny bits of matter, orbit a core, with spaces between. Then it was admitted that they had no idea what attraction kept these infinitesimally small particles energized and orbiting, not flying off in all directions. The term then used was ‘nuclear glue’, as they had no idea what force kept each little ‘galaxy’ in such perfect integrity! **They just couldn’t fathom ‘spirit’!** Nor would they admit to it if they could!

From this we can realize also that matter is in fact composed largely of **space**, that space encapsulated within the little atomic and sub-atomic ‘galaxies’. Sort of like space-filled empty bubbles oriented around a microscopic core!

Below is a fascinating update by an accomplished scientist, who addresses relevant considerations in this area of thought that adds much to our comprehension.

Startling Quantum Mechanic Discovery

“As you know, all things that we can see – living or non-living – are composed of atoms. But these atoms are also made up of smaller particles, sub-atomic particles, called quanta.

One of the basic rules of quantum mechanics is that everything is made up of little, microscopic particles. So it is that

** quantum particles (or light particle “ wave packets” as science now calls them) form atoms.*

** Atoms form molecules.*

** Molecules form objects.(living and non-living).*

Therefore, all material objects are made up of invisible “particles”. We do not fully understand how they operate. But we now know this: that everything that we can see is made up of things that we cannot see.

Amazed Scientists Turn to a Previously REJECTED Book

And were you aware, that this is precisely what an amazing old book known as the Bible said 2,000 years ago. It claims this: “The things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.” (Hebrews 11:3) Not only are all material objects made up of “particles”, but also they are made up of forces that keep those particles and objects together.

*We now know from our understanding of quantum mechanics that the force which keeps electrons tied to the nuclei of atoms is **LIGHT**.*

So, light ties the particles together to form atoms. And atoms are tied together to make molecules. And then, finally, objects.

*Only in the last century have we discovered that all forms of matter are, in fact, **SOLIDIFIED LIGHT!***

The biblical book of Genesis claims that in the beginning the Creator of the universe said, “Let there be light.” (Genesis 1:3)

*It says that the very first thing God made was **LIGHT**. Genesis says that the Creator made light before He made any material thing. It insists that He made light before He made the sun and the moon. Now, through our new understanding of quantum mechanics, we realize that nothing can exist until light first exists!*

*Our sun, and every other object in the universe, living or non-living, is made up of **LIGHT!** You ask, How could the writer of Genesis have known such a deep and mysterious truth? Could it be that the Creator of light and of quantum mechanics revealed it to him?*

So, thousands of years before we discovered the truth of quantum mechanics, the Bible had already revealed that:

1. Light was created first.

2. Nothing could be made without light.

3. Everything is made up of “unseen” particles.

From first hand research as a front line field scientist over 43 years, I have been driven to this conclusion: The Bible was right before science was. The Bible is never catching up to truth. Rather, truth is forever catching up to the Bible!”

Light or Spirit?

This of course raises the question, was the first act of Creation something new, or was it merely creating such a thing as a spectrum of visibility in a pre-existing phenomenon: energy?

We should pose the possibility that the scientific community, unable to fathom spirit, would use a word as close to spirit as they can: **Light**, which is the most fundamental yet most prolific manifestation of the Power of God’s Spirit. He emits an ‘energy’ that would appear to us as brilliant light. He is manifested in Light: His Glorified state. In fact, the Father is an all-Powerful Light Source, a glory that would instantly consume any physical

being coming near. A power greater than the sum of all the heavenly bodies He created, our sun being comparatively a mere dwarf star. (1st Tim. 6:16)

If we could enlarge an atom to, say, a ping pong ball size, its outer shell would be the revolving electron particles, while the nucleus would be as a grain of sand centered within. The overall atom being mostly space! But then, if we were to enlarge each sub-atomic particle that makes up the electrons, protons or neutrons, we would see a similar configuration. Infinitesimally small bits of matter orbiting a speck, but composed mostly of space! What might look like a solid steel ball bearing to us is largely space, with an almost unmeasurably tiny amount of actual matter within each of the atoms or quanta of which its molecules consist! What should be apparent at this point is that all matter is composed of unseeable particles, orbiting a nuclear core, like space-filled bubbles, consisting of vastly more space than material.

The Other Dimension

The area of consideration thus far, has been the physical world, that dimension we call matter. Most of our thinking is oriented to the material dimension. But we're made aware (and this was understood even by the ancients) that our existence is from another dimension: "*for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'*" Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, **we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone...**" (Acts 17:28-29) God's Divine Nature is not material! There IS another dimension, one that is intangible!

In Him we **live**, and **move**, and have **being!** Three important considerations: Life itself (our non-material component) and the material realm in which we have functional mobility, even our very mind and personality, is brought into being by the Spirit Power that creates all the Universe and incessantly sustains it, material and non-material. But our individual being is incomplete and irrelevant without the conscious mentality that the gift, 'the spirit in man', that God generates, implants and also sustains within each individual being. (Incidentally, also by which He can interrelate with us and we with Him! (Phil. 2:5 & 2:13))


It's the non-material side we should also be aware of, because it is essential to understand the Nature of God and the realities of existence. We think of matter as 'real' stuff, but matter is temporary, spirit is eternal, not subject to decay. Spirit is as indestructible (immortal) as God is. Our existence is temporary, but we are offered opportunity to enter into the other dimension which provides us immortality. Paul in 1st Corinthians 15 makes a powerful case for that. We are in potential receipt of a spirit existence, and as Peter words it, to be... "*partakers of the Divine Nature*"! (2nd Peter 1:4)

Spirit Gives Life to 'spirits'

In addition to physical life forms, there is another world made up of spirit generated beings. (A true and only parallel universe) Besides God, there is the angelic world, including holy and unholy (demonic) personalities. They in that realm are capable of self-generating independent thought. They, as we are, are given free moral agency.

When we allow ourselves to conceive of Spirit as a dimension of existence, we can then properly conceive of God in the Spirit. Both the Father and the Son draw their existence in and of Spirit. Each gives their own distinct and separate personalities to the increment of Spirit of which they are composed. Profound concepts such as this are "*understood by the things that are made*", as Romans 1:20 explains, "*even His eternal power and Godhead*"! The realities of that 'parallel universe' are illustrated by the physical side. The same Spirit creates BOTH! And, notice, I use the present tense, not the past.

Omnipresent Spirit

Gods' Spirit creates and sustains all things. Even while in and of the material dimension, we exist in and of Him! (Acts 17:28) The Life He provides us, the spirit (mental consciousness) He imparts to our material form, is a measure of the nature of God. We exist for the moment of substance generated by Spirit expressed as energy, and energy converted to matter. (Einstein deduced for us the conversion formula between the latter two forms.) But there is another 'conversion formula', one that describes our ultimate destiny. Being actually composed directly of eternal Spirit: "*The glorious liberty of the sons of God*"! (Romans 8:21) 

The Nature of Gods' Spirit

It wasn't all that far into the New Testament Era before Gnostic Teachings and Judaic Beliefs began being Blended into Fundamental Christian Theology. The Result Being that We today are Afflicted with Contradicting Belief Systems as to the True 'Nature of God'. But in order to Correctly Understand this matter, We MUST first Acquaint ourselves with the Nature of His Spirit.

The most divisive Theological issue found among Christians (and one which has confounded the Jewish communities as well) is that area of thought called 'the Nature of God'. God is Spirit. On that much we all agree. So then, why is it that we have focused our minds so fervently and incessantly on the "nature" of the Beings we and the Scriptures refer to as the 'Father' and the "Son"? Since God is not only A Spirit, but IS Spirit, shouldn't it first be our first priority to properly understand the 'nature of that Spirit'?

A leading minister, a Doctor of Theology, in the Church of God, when attempting to explain the rationale for major conceptual changes being implemented in the Church more than a decade ago, alleged that a proof demonstrating that "God could not be two Beings, because for that to be true, there would of necessity need to be TWO Spirits!" This same leading minister, with letters after his name, on another occasion related a case where a minister and his wife, after years in the Church, came to realize that "one of them conceived of there being two Spirits, while the other conceived of there being only one! They didn't know that about each others views for years!"

So, not only are we bombarded with arguments of every imaginable conception, that God is but a single Being and that Jesus wasn't God, or that God is a family presently consisting of two Beings, or that there really is only one but that One is able to be manifested 'hypostasically' in any of three different 'persons', depending on the particular venue of narrative being presented.

What should be obvious at this point is that we are overlooking a key consideration, without which we will be forever frustrated in coming to a correct and complete understanding.

WHO IS God's Spirit? Or, should we even be wording the question this way? Is God's Spirit even a WHO? Or, is it a what? We're pre-conditioned by conventional Trinitarian explanations to conceive of God's Spirit as a separate, conscious Being, but is it really?

The Spirit Dimension

Being that God is a Spirit, our consideration of the means and manner of His existence must be done only with a correct perception of the existence of Spirit. To do that, we must broaden our perceptual field sufficiently to realize that there is a real spirit world. Secondly, we need to factor in the fact that nothing, material or spiritual, exists that doesn't originate with God. There are angels and angelic beings. They are spirit. There are demons, also existing in and of the spirit dimension. The Saints of God enjoy the promise that they also will be raised immortal (or changed instantly into a spirit form, if they are among those who are alive and remain at the time of Christ's second coming).⁷ The Saints also will some day, become 'immortal', composed of Spirit. So, besides God, we have three other kinds of beings, known to be in existence in the spirit dimension. Existing in and of a 'substance' (not implying physical material) that perhaps we could, for sake of necessity, (as

⁷ 1st Corinthians 15: 49-53

we need to refer to it by some term), call ‘*an essence - commodity*’.

But all the while, this essence commodity exudes from God. While these varying kinds of spirit beings exist in and of the same essence as does God, one major difference is that this essence originates with and continually emanates from God, but not from these created spirit beings. His is the origin of the power for spirit beings to exist, just as much as for the material world to exist. Paul quoted the insightful pagan poet-philosopher: “*For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring.*” (Acts 17:28) Our very existence, as well as the perpetuated existence of physical matter and energy, is the direct and incessant emanation of the sustaining power of God. “*All things are of God...*” (2nd Corinthians 5:18) “*And He is before all things and by Him all things exist*” (Colossians 1:17) ⁸ We couldn’t even have a consciousness, except for the ‘*spirit in man*’ that He bequeaths to each one of us. That spirit, even that manifested in the form of human consciousness, is only by the Power of God. The same is true of matter and energy. It came into existence by, and is sustained in existence by, the power of God through His Omnipotent Spirit.

But matter is matter, and spirit is spirit. There is a material existence and there is a spirit existence. We’re now of the material, but upon conversion, we become predestined to an existence in the spiritual. The latter half of 1st Corinthians 15 covers this subject specifically: “*...There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. The first man Adam was made a living soul; (correctly defined as an air-breathing creature) the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*” (v. 44-45)

But to even begin to understand the True Nature of God, we must first have a fundamental understanding of spirit. Though it is non-material commodity, nevertheless, it is just as

⁸ The previous verse says: “For by Him were all things created, that are in the heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,...all things were created by Him, and for Him.”

real. In fact, considering its longevity, it’s even more real than tangible physical matter. It just isn’t a substance that we in our physically limited state can detect.

Now, back to the matter that our eminent ‘Doctor of Theology’ posed: that there would need to be two Spirits. Using his rationale, we should ask, Is two enough? The angelic world are spirits. The demon world are spirits. The spirit in man which imparts human consciousness is also created by God and is preserved by God after our decease for our future resurrection. The future spirit-born Saints of God will also be immortal spirit beings. Are these all of the same spirit, or are there many spirits? And what is the source of the power to exist in spirit form? No, this consideration reveals something profound: That while physical matter can be fashioned into vessels of honor and vessels of contempt, (see Rom. 9:20-23) so also spirit can impart existence to both angels and demons alike. Many physical life forms are fashioned of the same material elements, but are distinct and separate individual beings. The same essence-commodity will one day fashion and provide the means of existence to the Saints of the Most High God, imparting to them the immortality promised. Again the question: Are these all of the same spirit, and is it the same essence-commodity of which God exists? The answer to this provides the answer to our eminent Doctor’s theological dilemma.

When we perceive of God’s Spirit as a ‘third person’, as Trinitarianism causes so many to do, we’re diverted from the obvious. That spirit beings can and do exist in and of spirit that originates with God, a power emanating from Him continually, creating a dimension in which many beings of differing character-stature CAN and DO exist. God Himself exists in and of the spirit dimension, except in His case (or perhaps I should say, in Their case, *Elohim* expresses a plurality.) They alone are distinct in that. They’re ‘originating’ Spirit-sources. No spirit being other than God can create something from apparent nothing (not to suggest that God’s Spirit is nothing, only that it is invisible to us and non-material.)

Where Does Character Originate?

Now, another area we need to consider, is whether God's Spirit itself possesses a separate and independent consciousness, OR if it's the Being composed of that Spirit that imparts consciousness and its resulting character TO that Spirit.

Everything that exists exists **of** something. We are all composed of physical matter. Does our matter provide us with our consciousness, or does our consciousness provide the character to the physical beings we are. If matter provided consciousness, why wouldn't all beings have similar character? Why would some be good while others, identical in physical form, are evil? Why do animals, created of the same material substance as we have such vastly different mental make-up? Let's broaden the question to the spirit world. Though composed of the same essence-commodity, why are angels 'righteous' while demons are incorrigibly wicked? From this we see that there's more to consciousness than the physical dimension in which we exist.

(The spirit in man, which gives us consciousness, that we can develop in a good way or which we can choose to corrupt, (in other words, exercising a free moral agency) is something beyond the scope of this booklet. As our question is the nature of God's Spirit, it will have to suffice here to state that our intellect and consciousness is a non-material component of our being, which gives the evolutionist fits, no doubt! A component that can be perpetuated outside of a physically supported existence, as when we become spirit, we will still be the same person we were, only then in an immortal Spirit-form! (Romans 8:19))

How Many Spirits?

So, is there only one spirit, or are there many sources of spirit? Are there spirits or sources of spirit that emanate from some **other** source than God? If that were the case, what other source could there possibly be? Does Spirit have a self-living ability as do the Father and the Son? (John 5:26)

When we conceive of the matter correctly, we are drawn to the conclusion that all life, whether in the physical dimension or that in the spirit dimension, originates with God. There is no other source of existence! God's Spirit is that ultimate source: The dimension in which God exists and the power by which He functions and projects Himself is the aura of His Spirit.

Next question: Do both the Father and the Son draw their existence from the same Spirit? Do all angels and demons, and ultimately Saints, draw their existence from the same spirit, or is there another spirit-source in existence? If there is, what is the source of that other essence-commodity? Is this the dimension in which the Father and the Son are One? Is this the means of our eventually becoming fully **one** with them as Jesus prayed for that Passover evening? (John 17:11 & 21-22)⁹

We know that Satan was given his existence and consciousness by God. If there is an alternate spirit life source, wouldn't Satan and his demons have been of that other one? As a second consideration in this vein, though given consciousness, each recipient has a degree of self-determination, what many refer to as 'free moral agency'. Though given by God, conscious intellect, an imparted spirit component of our physical existence, is ours to develop out however we choose.

Being that we're at this point, we should pause to notice another startling reality: That we can receive into our individual consciousness another externally-sourced consciousness. Satan can project his thoughts into unsuspecting recipients, and God can impart His Spirit, (His conscious and righteous mentality), which is in addition to our spirit (consciousness). *"The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have*

⁹ "These words spake Jesus, and lifter up His eyes to heaven ...Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, **that they may be one, as we are.** That they all may be **one**; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also might be **one in us**:..." John 17:1, 11 & 21

received the Spirit of adoption... (sonship)”
Romans 8:16 & 15. (Read that entire chapter!)¹⁰

God IS Spirit!

It was stated above (page 7) that God is **A** Spirit, and God **IS** Spirit.¹¹ We need to comprehend what this means. Not only does God **exist** in and of the Spirit, but He **IS** that **Prime Originating Source** of it! All Power that exists originates from and is focused in God, and He alone is the Ever-Sustaining Source of all that exists, whether of Spirit or energy or matter or life or Authority. He also imparts a unique conscious Personality to that Prime Source! We find in John 5:26 a revealing statement: “*For as the Father has life in Himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself;*” These **two** are **each** Life-Sources. Another is in Matthew 28:18. “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*” This existence-generating, ultra-territorial Spirit-Power is shared exclusively between these two Beings!

(In years past, it was alleged that it is our destiny “to become god as God is God”! As realized at Arnhem, Netherlands late in World War II, there **is** such a thing as ‘a bridge too far’. Many thought it an overstatement. Though the rhetoric expressing this point of understanding has eased noticeably from its source side, it was made with apparent disregard for the obvious. That, while we are destined to be brought into the God Family, by the resurrection from the dead, raised incorruptible, and created in a form that is God-plane, and immortal, we will not have the **full** Power that God has with respect to being a source of life or of what exists. “*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, ...when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*” (1st John 3:2) To see Him as He is, isn’t necessarily to BE Him fully as He is!)

What conventional explanations obscure is that Spirit is a non-material ‘essence-commodity’, providing the MEANS for all in the spirit world to exist. The Saints of God will ultimately draw

their existence from this same ‘commodity’ and will impart their unique personalities to that spirit life of which they then exist. Though separate ‘persons’, yet ‘one’ in composition and character. (And One with the Father and the Son.) This state is a step above that of the angels, showing that there is a higher plane of existence than the angelic level.¹²

Better than Angels?

Hebrews 1 has considerable information about angels. “*Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. ...But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*” (vs. 4-7 & 13-14)

But, for a time, the Being who became the Son of God, while in the flesh, took on the same relative stature that humankind has: “*What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: (This is speaking of mankind in general.) But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ...For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.*” (Heb. 2:6-7 & 9-10 & 16) A priceless glimpse into spirit-form

¹⁰ 2nd Cor. 11:4, Eph. 2:2 & 3:16, 1st John 3:24 & 4:13

¹¹ John 4:24 etc.

¹² Hebrews 1:4

existence. He lowered Himself to an existence below that of the angelic world, yet was restored to Glorified form above angels of every level. What these passages also reveal is that the Spirit-Born Saints **will also** exist on a plane **above** that of God's angels! They'll also exist OF God's Spirit. God's Spirit, obviously, is not a separate 'third person' but rather a life-essence which provides existence to many levels of spirit beings: God, His Saints, Archangels, Angels, and demons, as well as imparting free-cognitive consciousness in human kind and programmed-instinct in the animal kind. All these are the product of God's Spirit Power.

So long as we remain enmeshed in incessant arguments as to the **number** of persons in the Godhead, and fail to fathom the nature of the spirit dimension, we will never acquire full answers! Referred to earlier, a theologian highly educated and highly regarded in the Church of God, at the end, didn't understand this area, causing him consternation over a fundamental point: That TWO God-Beings exist in and of ONE SPIRIT. When we are enjoined unto the Lord, we become one spirit.¹³ When God's Holy Spirit is projected to us, it can be of either or both, as both impart their individual minds (personalities) to their Spirit existences. Spirit is also the means of the conveyance of God's consciousness into our spirits (our conscious mentalities). (1st Cor. 2:9-16)

Satan, a spirit (and for that matter his demons), is able to project his thoughts into our spirits (minds). God represents those thoughts as flaming arrows,¹⁴ the most feared personal war device of all time prior to more fearsome modern weaponry! God all the more is able to project His thoughts into us, provided we're receptive to them. *"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a*

*man, save the **spirit of man** which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the **Spirit of God**. Now we have received not the **spirit of the world**, but the **spirit which is of God**; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the **Holy Spirit** teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receives not the things of the **Spirit of God**: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ...For who hath known **the mind of the Lord**, that he may instruct him? But we have **the mind of Christ**. (1st Cor. 2:9-16)*

Multiple Sources?

Now, in this, do we have multiple minds, originating from multiple spirit-sources, or is it one Spirit, and individual manifestations of that One Spirit? In this one passage, there's this terminology: the spirit of man, the (Satan inspired) spirit of the world, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, the mind of the Lord and the mind of Christ! Where does the conscious power to think come from? What comprehensive mental capability do we of and by ourselves have without the Spirit of God and Christ? It's limited to just 'the things of man'! What the human intellect can comprehend (which can be truly impressive). But the things of God are not discerned by human intellect alone! *"But the natural man receives not the things of the **Spirit of God**: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned..."* (Reference above)

The picture the above passage presents is that of a mental realm into which we can enter: an awareness of **spiritual** truths not discernable by human mentality alone! With it comes a power to make life-changing character determinations, in concert with a projection of God's very Nature into us. God's Spirit is a dimension which we can **enter**, and with 'them' become 'ONE'. (John 17:11 & 21) We do so by the Power of God's Spirit which conveys the same Mind of which He IS. *"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one*

¹³ 1st Corinthians 6:17


¹⁴ Ephesians 6:16

spirit.” (1st Cor. 6:17) “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*” (Phil. 2:5) etc.

Spirit is a realm of existence, in which all that we identify as ‘spirit beings’ exist, the Ultimate of these being God Himself. That same Spirit realm will one day provide the means of existence of the immortal Saints of the Most High God. For the present time,¹⁵ we’re limited to a unifying consciousness by the indwelling of God’s Spirit. Besides conscious understanding, we also ‘receive the power to become the Sons of God’: **that** existence fully realized at the Last Trump, when we’re elevated into a Spirit-life form. Most people fail to notice the *distinction* in John 1:12 “*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*” This speaks of ‘**those who have received Him**’ being in possession of the ‘**power to become**’, indicating that there is a future realization, beyond our initial ‘receipt of Him’! It’s something we WAIT for. (1st John 3:2) The way we ‘receive Him’ is by receiving His Spirit: A life-changing power that, once we enter into it, eventually will provide us with the means of existence at a plane higher than angels. (As angels were never offered Sonship! (Heb. 1:5)) We too will BE Spirit, though presently, we, living in the material dimension, can only ‘have’ God’s Spirit as a life-changing component working within our own mentality.

¹⁵ “*For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be **fashioned like unto his glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*” (Phil. 3:21) “*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.*” (1st John 3:2) “*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the **glory which shall be revealed in us**. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption **into the glorious liberty of the children of God.**” (Romans 8:18-21) The righteous shall shine like the stars of heaven! (See Daniel 12:3)*

As we have seen, the UNFATHOMABLE POWER of God’s Spirit gives existence and consciousness to all living things, including varied spirit beings, such as angels and all the heavenly hosts. It also allows limited consciousness to we humans, with that invested capability taken back into God’s hands at death, it being preserved for a future restoration in a resurrection. (Luke 23:46 & Acts 7:59) Hopefully, the First!

There is ultimately One Spirit, “*For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*” (Ephesians 2:18) “*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;* (Ephesians 4:4) It is those who mis-conceive the nature of God’s Spirit who in their minds create a circumstance requiring there be more than one Spirit! 

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Dispensations of Gods' Spirit

***“If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His!” (Romans 8:9)
Scripture reveals a most fascinating situation with regard to the Emerging
Availability of this Essential Element in the Salvation of Humanity.***

The Feast of Pentecost, widely acknowledged as the founding date of the New Testament Church, on the fiftieth day after Christ's presentation as the True Wave Sheaf Offering, was marked by a most startling event. The *visible* outpouring of Gods' Holy Spirit, documented in Acts chapter 2, was the rarest of occasions, bringing to our attention that a notable milestone had been achieved in the spirit-level inter-relationships between mankind and his Creator. At this precise moment in time, the situation changed in ways we have yet to fully fathom. A similar repetition, related in Acts chapters 10 (& 11), enhanced the milestone a step further, powerfully illustrating that this out-pouring had applicability among the Gentiles as well as upon Israel. In fact, these Gentiles would come to play a greater role than ethnic Israel might want.

As with the crucifixion and death of the LORD, our True Passover, His resurrection late in the third day thereafter,¹⁶ and His presentation before the Father in Heaven mid morning of the next,¹⁷ a whole new administrative paradigm came into effect, altering Gods' spiritual relationship with humanity from that time forward. With His ascension into Heaven to serve as our High Priest before the Throne of God,¹⁸ we are now capable of receiving and being empowered by Gods' Holy Spirit, imparting a measure of His very Life into us,¹⁹ in ways never possible before Christ's ascension, except under the rarest situation.

Considering the seeming contradiction in the words of Jesus, found in John chapters 6 and then in 7, we are given further clue to an even greater dispensation of Gods' Spirit than is presently the case. In John 6:44 (and 39 & 65) He states emphatically, *“No man can come unto me except the Father...draw him:”* Yet a season later, we see Him uttering the proclamation that *“If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink”*, (John 7:37) what we regard as a wide open invitation to **any** who want to respond. A similar invitation as we read of in Revelation 22:17 which leaves open the opportunity for any individual to freely respond, saying, *“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.”* We recognize a **‘whosoever will’** period of time, but most fail to realize that it's implemented after Christ returns, in what we know as the Millennial and post-Millennial age, not the present, limited “no man **can** come unless drawn of the Father” situation that exists today!

¹⁶ His death and burial taking place late on a Wednesday would put His resurrection (three days and three nights later) late on the weekly Sabbath: That same point in time when the Priests were cutting the Sheaf of first-ripe grain to wave up for acceptance the following morning. (Lev. 23:10-11)

¹⁷ The very verses Jesus used to assure Himself of a timely death sentence (a composite of Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13) as quoted in Matthew 26:64, both refer to the Wave Sheaf Offering occasion. David relates what is said at this occasion and Daniel describes the scene of His official presentation and acceptance before *the Ancient of Days*.

¹⁸ Hebrews 3:1, 7:15 thru 8:2, (esp. v.25), & 12:24.

¹⁹ *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”* Romans 8:14-17

The temporal contexts of Jesus' two statements are a Holyday season apart. Both statements are true, but in their proper time settings. In this present dispensation, any who thirst (desire for the truth) are those who the Father has specifically drawn. It isn't natural to have such a desire. (Romans 8:7) Nor is it entirely of ourselves! *"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"* (Romans 2:4)

If we step back from the matter and consider it in a wider context, we can see that there have been and will yet be differing situations with regard to the availability of Gods' Holy Spirit throughout time. In fact, we can identify **four** distinct situations, distinct '**dispensations**', under which Gods' Spirit will be administered to humankind. We've already considered three. **1.** That era before Christ's resurrection and acceptance to intercede before the throne of the Universe on our behalf, **2.** the present Christian era, begun on Pentecost and **3.** the Millennial Age during which any who wish to may freely come! But if we consider a startling prophecy from Ezekiel 37, we see there is yet a *fourth* in which resurrected peoples are provided their first opportunity to receive Gods' Spirit also, compensating for the lack of opportunity in their previous life-situations. That period is alluded to in Revelation 20, referring to 'the rest of the dead', who don't live again until **after** the 1000 years are ended!

When we review each of these major segments of world history as it involves the availability of Gods' Spirit, we see differing *degrees* of availability. And, it's that ever-broadening availability that's the primary focus of this chapter. It's this administration that most emphatically illustrates the implementation of Gods' Master Plan. Only when we understand the application of Gods' Spirit to greater humanity can we fully understand how God will bring opportunity for all of His Created mortals to enter into His expanding Family of ever-living Beings.

Before Christ's Ascension

In what could be called the Pre-Christian Dispensation, Gods' Spirit was available only to an exceptional few. Those with whom God was specifically working to establish His model nation and to implement that structured form of worship, then necessary: a set of ceremonial performances (due to the absence of an acceptable Sacrifice for sin and the non-availability of the Spirit), which illustrated important spiritual truths relevant to His Redemptive Plan and the coming dispensation when **the True Faith**²⁰ necessary for salvation would be possible, with the added component of Gods' Spirit.

Very few had access to Gods' Spirit in that age.

We are also made aware that Israel as a nation was specifically blinded, lest they attain an adequate understanding and become converted. Old Testament prophecies²¹ indicated as much, and Jesus affirmed the same. The Apostle Paul re-affirmed that the condition remained in effect, not only in his day,²² but extending on thru that time-frame until the times of the Gentiles would be fulfilled!²³

After the Feast of Pentecost

²⁰ Romans 9:31-32 *"But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it **not by faith**, but as it were by the works of the law."*

²¹ *"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they **believed not** on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, **He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.**"* (John 12:37-40)

²² *"But **their minds were blinded**: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ".* (2nd Cor. 3:14) (also Romans 11:7)

²³ *"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that **blindness** in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."* (Romans 11:26)

In the Christian Dispensation, when that Day had come to fulfillment, a number of **selected** individuals had Gods' Spirit visibly poured-out upon them without their having asked for it! (They had only a little reason to suspect any-thing like this was to happen!) These, notice, were not observing the day with their Jewish counterparts at the Temple, but were observing a separate date at a separate location! (in a house) The Jews' observance was Sivan 6, a Friday that year, whereas the Disciples observed it on a Sunday, the 50th day from the correct Wave Sheaf Offering, also typically a Sunday, (the '*morrow after the* (weekly) *Sabbath*' that falls within the Days of Unleavened Bread.) Had any of these been keeping the more prevalent Jewish observance, which actually was different than what Leviticus 23 proscribed, they would have missed this out-pouring!

But what was especially significant in this startling occasion was the realization that access to Gods' Spirit was **now available** in a way it never before was. A quantum leap had taken place thru the office of our High Priest, now interceding before the True Altar of which the one on Earth was only an inferior replica. "*He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*" (John 7:38-39) There was a time when the Spirit wasn't yet available, then a time when it was!

Yet, the outpouring in this second dispensation was still thoughtfully and carefully meted out. God the Father makes determination of who's to be called in this age, and the rest are concluded in blindness. Even those who **we** would regard as 'prime candidates' for salvation are, for the most part blinded, not yet called. "*No man can come unto me except the Father...draw him:*" is perhaps one of the most quickly minimized New Testament teachings of the present age, as there is little true understanding of the coming Millennial Age or what's beyond it.

After Christ's Return

In the Millennial Dispensation, when the Saints have been resurrected to Spirit-Life to live and reign with Christ in His Kingdom on Earth, the true and Everlasting Gospel will be announced to all then living by a powerful angel. "*And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*" (Rev. 14:6-7) With the announcement of the demise of the Beast Power in the previous passage, all living will be directed to the worship of the true God, the one who Created! The One who at this point in time takes possession of His heritage and rules all nations: "*And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.* 16: *And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,* 17: *Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.* 18: *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou should give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great;..* 19: *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament:...*" (Revelation 11:15-19) Christ, reigning with His Bride, will then open the Temple (for business) providing opportunity for the receipt of His Spirit, and by it, salvation. He, His Bride and understanding witnesses will urge all living toward receiving it. "*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*" (Rev.22:17) This is the situation referred to by Jesus in John 7:37-38. It is to be the situation after His return, effecting the third dispensation!

After the Second Resurrection

Though the Spirit will then be freely available to any who truly desire to have it, (being willing to accept its life-changing effect) we see in the post-Millennial Age an even more remarkable event! In the Post-Millennial Dispensation, the millions who lived and died without having been afforded opportunity will rise to then have their **first opportunity** for salvation. Those who died without having ever been evangelized, those who lived and died before the time of Christ, those who were kept blinded (yes, even by God) during their lifetimes, those who didn't survive infancy, all will rise after the thousand years in what is known as 'the second resurrection'. That resurrection referred to in Revelation 20:5 & 12, when '*the books are opened*' to their under-standing and 'the book of Life' is re-opened for additional names to be entered! There is ample reason to believe that the 'whosoever will' condition will continue on thru this era as well. (Request my free 96-page booklet on the Resurrections)

It's the prophecy in Ezekiel 37 that is most astounding. Many take this narrative to be *purely allegorical*, but with a proper understanding of the Doctrine of the Resurrections, seeing its reality, it becomes profoundly revealing. The last dozen chapters of Ezekiel describe the co-ordinated physical and spiritual worship systems extant thru the Millennial Age, but chapter 37 offers a preview into the age just beyond it.

The following chapter will consider this out-pouring in greater detail. With the resurrection and restoration of national Israel, we will see them granted Gods' Spirit unilaterally. A condition they've never before experienced!

Not a Sentencing Just Yet!

In this timeframe we see a resurrection involving specifically **all** the peoples of Israel. (Both Jewish and non-Jewish Israel. Yes, there is a non-Jewish Israel, in fact the vastly greater number are non-Jewish.) This judgment is **not** a 'sentencing event', as we see them being resurrected and restored to their former lands, reunified into a single nation again, with their King David set-up as king over them! And then, given Gods' Spirit and allowed a period of time to live out their intended destiny in the sight of surrounding nations! What would be the point of all of that IF this 'judgment' were just their sentencing event? Typical modern religion obviously has a problem in that they are woefully ignorant of this final age, even if they're among those acknowledging the Millennial Kingdom!


The Greatest Outpouring

But what is most revealing about this event is the Spirit of God being placed within them. Obviously then, these didn't have it before. They're **all** given it together, without their having asked for it, not unlike the unsuspecting recipients on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and again later in Acts 10 & 11.

Though those other nations, also resurrected, living in this same physical re-generation,²⁴ have Gods' Spirit available to them upon request (continuing the 'whosoever will' invitation), Israel, on the other hand, will have it **placed within them outright!** This 'second resur-rection' period represents the **last** opportunity for salvation, and is appropriate to this resurrected generation **only**. It will be Israel's challenge to 'sink or swim' spiritually! They were by-and-large kept blinded during their first lifetimes, and this provides them the opportunity their life-situation denied them previously. Israel's people here will either follow through to full conversion or they will fail to do so, and will **not** have their names added into the Book of Life that we see referenced again at the **final sentencing event** of the 'Great White Throne' (Rev. 20:13-15, John 5:29) where all who have ever lived, who weren't in the first resurrection, are re-raised together, segregated and justly sentenced to either Life or eternal death! (Mat. 25:31-46) (Rev. 20:15)

²⁴ Luke 11:31-32

God's reason for keeping Israel spiritually blinded is to afford the majority their opportunity period during the best of ages, the post-Millennial age, when Satan is completely absent from society and when their likelihood of success will be greatest. This in keeping with the explanation given in Romans 11:25-26. "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that **blindness** in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so **all Israel shall be saved**: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

So, in these four dispensations, we see Gods' Spirit in ever-increasing availability. "God is not willing that any should perish", (2nd Pet. 3:9) and He's revealed to us His Plan by which the greatest number can avail themselves of that life-changing Power and avoid suffering such a fate as eternal death in the Lake of Fire. 

🌀 CHAPTER 4 🌀

When Gods' Spirit is Poured Out

An Explicit Promise, made in Ezekiel 37, to this day Remains Unfulfilled. Nothing could be more Insightful than this Outpouring of God's Spirit upon the Entire House of Israel. Do we appreciate its Significance?

Being generally unfamiliar with the identities of all of the peoples of Israel, religious organizations see Ezekiel 37 as a reference to an event which they are unable to adequately explain. To them, this reference is speaking of the Jews, despite ample internal evidence that the **two** houses, Judah and Israel, are to the present day distinct and separate peoples. The true identities of the peoples of Israel who aren't Jews isn't commonly accepted or taught.

Another obstacle to correctly understanding this extraordinary passage is the **time setting** during which this event will take place. Not understanding the various ages in which God will deal with His people, then with the rest of mankind, and the various resurrections prophesied to happen, why they are to occur and what their ultimate purposes are, religiosity is left having to speculate without having an adequate field of perception.

Ezekiel 37 presents a vast '**valley of dry bones**', a scene well-known for its graphic imagery, which represents the entire long-deceased house of Israel. When resurrected and brought back to a conscious state, these lament their politically divided national condition, something God intends to then correct.

Reviewing Ezekiel 37

*The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, 2: And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. ... 10: So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. 11: Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the **whole house of Israel**: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. 12: Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will **open your graves**, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 13: And **ye shall know that I am the LORD**, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, 14: **And shall put my spirit in you**, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.*

Re-Unifying the Nation

*15: The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, 16: Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For **Judah**, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another*

stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the **house of Israel** his companions: 17: And join them one to another into one stick; and **they shall become one** in thine hand. 18: And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? 19: Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and **the tribes of Israel** his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of **Judah**, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. 20: And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. 21: And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: 22: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be **no more two nations**, neither shall they be divided into **two kingdoms** any more at all: 23: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and **will cleanse them**: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. 24: And **David my servant shall be king over them**; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. 25: And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. 26: Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be **an everlasting covenant** with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever-more. 27: My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, **I will be their God**, and they shall be my people. 28: And **the heathen shall know** that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

We can glean a number of important facts from this insightful narrative. **1.** First, that they will all be resurrected together, **2.** The state of their existence will be physical, **3.** That they will be reunified as a nation, (something not seen since the end of the reign of King Solomon), **4.** They will again be restored to the true worship of their **true** God, **5.** That their prevalent religious practices are detestable, **6. God will place His Spirit**

within them, a condition not seen at **any** time prior! (It's this situation that's the main focus of this chapter), **7.** They will be **sanctified as a nation**, **8.** God's sanctuary will be located among them, **9.** Resurrected King David will be their national leader, (he having been ruling under Christ, over the resurrected Apostles, over the physically-surviving twelve tribes during the Millennium. (Luke 22:30)), and **10.** Non-Israelites will be living among them and will bear witness of this! To this we could add an **11.** that they all will become acutely aware of their **ethnic identities**, as descendents of the tribes of Israel, a teaching specifically shunned in most Christian denominations, who for the most part identify all Jews as being what is meant by the term: 'Israel' despite the obvious evidence of the 'House of Israel' and of 'Judah' being distinct and separate 'houses' clear through to the beginning of the post-Millennial age mentioned in Revelation 20:5!

A Post-Millennial Age?

Where in the teachings of '*heaven and hell*' and the typical '*end of the world*' predictions is this scenario even remotely explainable? It takes a good understanding of God's Master Plan developed out through the Millennial Age and the post-Millennial Age, as illustrated in His Holy-days, to begin to be able to place these events. It speaks of an age in which true worshippers and 'heathen'⁴⁹ will co-exist, with a special focus among them, then living, on these who are awarded God's Spirit *en-masse*! Basing our understanding on the clear scriptures that only the deceased *Saved* are to be resurrected prior to the Millennium, we're left to conclude that the event described in Ezekiel 37 is post-Millennial!

We can easily discern from Ezekiel 37 the intention on God's part to provide these people a lengthy period of time in which to continue living. Why? If this resurrection was just a 'sentencing event', what would be the point of re-uniting the nations into a single house, under the rule of their

⁴⁹ Heathen in the sense of being ethnically non-Israelite, not necessarily unconverted or unconvertible. Keep in mind, this is the 'opportunity period' for all, but we see Israel being favored with a wholesale outpouring of His Spirit without their specifically having requested it!

resurrected King David? ⁵⁰ These people are **restored** not only to life, but to the land of Israel, and live there for quite some period of time. Not only that, but that God's Sanctuary will be set in their midst from that point onward! (v.28) (Continuing even beyond physical mankind's tenure on Earth.).

We can also see that in their previous existence, they **weren't** converted. Had they been, it would represent a '*second chance*', which isn't afforded to anyone! Those who have God's Spirit in the era before Christ's return, and who successfully 'finish the course' as Paul referred to it, are changed from mortal flesh to immortal Spirit at Christ's return! (Rev. 20:6) Either from their graves or from life directly. (1st Thess. 4:16-17)

Those who had God's Spirit, but who 'spurned it' or failed to 'stay the course' in some way, have the sure and dire situation described in Hebrews 10:26-29 awaiting them. (Which emphatically describes an irreversible condition!)

This **risk** helps explain why God is careful and specific as to whom He gives His Spirit. Israel for the most part has been **kept blinded** from a full understanding all these generations for a very specific reason. ⁵¹ In the present age, God limits opportunity to those He deems 'convertible'. No man CAN come to Him without having been extended the opportunity by being specifically **called of the Father!** "*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day*". (John 6:44) Not only is the availability of God's Spirit limited presently to those specifically called, but the motivation for the desire for it also is God-inspired.

Not so the post-Millennial age. There, His Spirit will be poured out openly upon them all. From

⁵⁰ Another 'problem area' with this statement is when David will be resurrected? Other prophecies suggest he will come-up in the first resurrection. That does not preclude David, having been in-training during the Millennial Age, from becoming their King in the post-Millennial Age. His expertise, both from his historical experience with them enhanced with his Millennial experience will be inestimable.

⁵¹ That a greater number can **ultimately** be saved! Romans 11:25-26. Two articles address this situation: "*And So, All Israel Shall be Saved*" and "*The Early and the Latter Rains*"

this, some pose a 'universal salvation' concept, by presuming, perhaps somewhat understandably, that this means they are *fully* converted as a result of the receipt of God's Spirit. The lessons of the present age, as well as during the 'whosoever will' opportunity situation of the Millennial Age, should inject the obvious. Not all who are given God's Spirit remain or ultimately end up converted. Quite a number 'jump ship' or 'make shipwreck'. ⁵² An ever present danger! There are those who 'quench' God's Spirit, and those whose neglect becomes irreversible. No less the case in that age.

What we **will** see is the God-imposed **veil** over the eyes of the majority of His chosen peoples being lifted. They will awake from their graves with the long-held theological stumbling blocks removed from their consciousness. Their former rigid theological positions which blocked a true understanding will be gone! That will be the primary difference. It will remain for them to '*work with*' what they are then given to effect full and ultimate conversion. (Conversion being **an ongoing process** then just as it is now! ⁵³)


Being in possession of God's Spirit, resurrected Israel will be restored to a condition like they should have had, had they not rejected the terms of the original Covenant. That time though, they will have the ability to see the **spiritual intent** of it clearly. They'll then be the model nation God intended they be. With the gift of God's Spirit will be the emplacement of His Laws within, as is the case today with 'Spiritual Israel', who have God's Laws written in their hearts, (Heb.8:10) not just upon stone tablets which outward Jews purport to so fervently revere.

*"But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people. (Rom. 10:21) For **God hath concluded them all in unbelief**, that he might have mercy upon all. (Rom. 11:32) ...my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as*

⁵² 1st Timothy 1:19, 1st Thessalonians 5:19

⁵³ Philippians 2:12 See my article "*What Must I Do?*"

concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (Rom. 9:3-8) But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, **hath not attained** to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by **faith**, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written,

Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (Rom. 9:31-33) For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one **inwardly**; and circumcision is that **of the heart, in the spirit**, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” (Rom. 2:28-29) National Israel too will have their day when they’ll be brought under the New Covenant! This is the real message of Ezekiel 37 

🌀 CHAPTER 5 🌀

Accessing Gods' Holy Spirit

On the Day of Pentecost, a Phenomenon occurred that changed the Dynamics of our Relationship with God from that day onward. Yet, that was only a Foretaste of Astounding Developments prophesied to Come!

The exclusive fellowship of those who’ve entered a particular class of worshipper is presently a strictly limited minority. Though politically correct religious society professes openness toward all believers, we are continually faced with the uncomfortable fact that to be a true person of Faith, one **MUST** possess Gods’ Holy Spirit! Paul the Apostle put it distinctly when he wrote in Romans 8:9, “...**Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.**” This should be an ‘eye opener’ to those who are inclined to accept any and all into their fellowship equally. It effectively says that the ‘true brotherhood’ is predicated upon having received Gods’ Spirit. That those not having received it are NOT one of His! Can we fully accept the implications of that statement of fact in this age?

The term the ‘*Spirit of Christ*’ warrants consideration. Do we understand this to be the same thing as the ‘Spirit of God’? Perhaps this is something we ought to address first.

In Acts 5:3 and 5:9 we see the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Lord (*kurios*, (not *Theos* in this case)) used interchangeably. Paul in Romans 8 wanted to make certain we understand our

source of access to this transforming Power.⁵⁴ Though God the Father was His source when in the flesh, He today projects it into those who are drawn to Him, thus the appropriateness of Paul’s terminology. There is one Spirit, not two, but that Spirit is made available to those who have met the conditions of receipt, thru the administration of our Intercessor before God’s Throne. (see Hebrews 7:25) “*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is **the mind of the Spirit**, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*” (Romans 8:26-27) (The earlier chapter: “*The Nature of God’s Spirit*” dwells on this in greater detail.) The ‘*Spirit of Christ*’ is the Spirit which He possesses and administers, having been given it by His Father.⁵⁵ “*For he whom God hath sent*

⁵⁴ In verse 9 Paul uses the term ‘Spirit of God’ and in verse 11 he refers to the ‘Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus’!

⁵⁵ Trinitarian thought would insist that the Spirit SENT by the Father into the Son was He Himself, and the Son would have received Himself into Himself, as all three are seen as one and the same Being! There’s no end to the odd

speakeeth the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. (John 3:34) This ‘exception’ leaves open the obvious, that it’s effectively ‘*measured*’ in all other situations. In other words, **we** receive Gods’ Spirit in degrees, appropriate to our Faith which defines our conversion level.

On two distinct historic occasions a dramatic manifestation occurred which illustrated that prophesied phenomenon, the original outpourings of Gods’ Holy Spirit: The more well-known one in Acts 2 and another in Acts 10:44-47 & 11:15. Though dramatic, these were limited occurrences, largely illustrating the reality of that initial fulfillment.⁵⁶

But in general, the **gift** of Gods’ Spirit is a **very restricted** resource. Limited by the requirement of having been **drawn** toward its receipt by God the Father! “*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*” (John 6:44) Compare this with Romans 8:11. “*But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*” In John 6, Christ is described as doing the raising, but in Romans 8, the Father does it. To rectify this seeming discrepancy, we must realize that it’s the **same Spirit**, and that the Father works with us entirely by and through His Son! The Father being the source, with His Son directing its application. As with all things involving the Father and Son, we see a collaborative relationship.

Sons of God

But there’s more to possessing Gods’ Spirit than just salvation with the promise of a resurrection. With it comes an engendering relationship referred to as ‘sonship’! “*And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son*

anomalies of that conceptual discipline! This article disregards that premise.

⁵⁶ Acts 2:17 “*And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:*

into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (Galatians 4:6) Being in possession of Gods Spirit makes us heirs of that same eternal generation. It’s in the first resurrection (or change, in the cases of those who are ‘alive and remain’) that we ultimately become Spirit Beings, immortal and incorruptible,⁵⁷ of similar life form as our Elder Brother. One Spirit provides the dimension and is the means of both the Father’s and the Son’s existence, and projects to us the same mind of, and the power to become, a son of God. “*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*” (John 1:12)⁵⁸ But such receipt is not without prerequisite. “*And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.* (1st John 3:24) We also need to be aware of where repentance comes from. “*Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*” (Acts 5:31-32)

In this **obedience prerequisite**, we’re brought to a realization of another manifestation of the indwelling of Gods’ Spirit. Our natural minds are cross-grained **against** the Commandments of God. We, in our natural state, are loathe to truly obey. Romans 8:7 says it so well.⁵⁹ Most worshippers love to exhibit their profuse love for the Lord, but inwardly, they take strong exception to even the suggestion that we keep His Commandments! Entire religious denominations are built around the core premise that the Law is ‘all done away’!

One should ask himself, is the negative attitude toward Gods’ Law in any way detrimental to the

⁵⁷ 1st Corinthians 15:49-57

⁵⁸ This verse is especially insightful, in that it speaks of ‘receiving Him’ as an accomplished fact, but becoming a son as a yet future attainment!

⁵⁹ “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because **the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.**” (Rom. 8:5-7)

receipt of Gods' Spirit? After all, the same original mind-force produces both. Here, Romans 8:7 says a great deal on this matter. To take the attitude that obedience to the Law is immaterial would force the conclusion that the Spiritual mind referred to a verse or two before would represent the same general orientation toward the Law as would the carnal mind!

Automatic Conversion?

In this generation, we equate the receipt of Gods' Spirit with conversion. Another area we should consider is whether Gods' Spirit can be lost, and if so, ones' converted status with it?

What few adequately consider is the fact that when in possession of Gods' Spirit, we are repositories of a priceless treasure. As 2nd Corinthians 4:6-7 so well states it, "*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*"

The question is, can a person **lose** the Spirit and what happens as a result? "*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*" (1st Cor. 3:16-17)

The indwelling of God's Holy Spirit makes us Temples of God! A sanctuary of His *Living Essence*, which imparts knowledge AND the very Life of His Son in us! Anyone who would bring in and willingly harbor lethal contaminants, whether sinful habits or false beliefs which inhibit growth, are set on a course for destruction. The receipt of Gods' Spirit is no small consideration. A couple of other scriptures make clear our obligation. "*Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (1st Thess. 5:19-23) "*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have*

tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Heb. 6:4-5) Not only is it possible to 'quench' (as in putting out a fire) the Spirit, but once the glow is fully extinguished, it can never be regenerated in that offender! Like with a 'stillborn' child, it can never again become the living Divine fetus it once was! No, conversion is not irreversible, nor is salvation automatic! One could easily get the idea from the above that extinguishing that Life of Christ living within us by the indwelling of His Spirit is tantamount to the unpardonable sin!

Gods' Spirit in the Future

Though in this age, Gods' Spirit is meted out **with** our active participation: by attaining a level of belief; a desire to repent; developing a degree of faith (that which is 'of ourselves'⁶⁰ at first), and a commitment to 'the Way' as publicly affirmed thru baptism. From that progression, we enter into the development phase of that other kind of Faith which is essential to our ultimate salvation: that which is NOT of ourselves.

Expanding Accessibility


Though at first, Gods' Spirit was dramatically given and visibly manifested upon a large number of believers, apparently without their request, (most then had no idea anything like this was coming), yet through to this present age, it remains **measured** only to those specifically drawn by the Father, in accordance with their faith and growth potential.

In the Millennial age, we see its availability expanded to include **any** who desire to receive it, but still upon request, as alluded to in places like Revelation 22:17. "*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever*

⁶⁰ See my article on "*The TWO Kinds of Faith*" (#19) for explanation of the kinds of faith our conversion experience must develop from and then into. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

will, let him take the water of life freely.” ⁶¹
(also John 7:37-38)

But in the post-Millennial age, we see Gods’ Spirit poured-out upon all Israel, *en masse*, without their specific request, upon being physically resurrected. ⁶² That receipt does not guarantee them ultimate salvation. They must from there ‘*work out their own salvation*’ just as we must today. (Philippians 2:12) To the rest of humanity living with them in that age, it remains freely available, but upon request, still subject to the same Faith-building process as described a couple of paragraphs back.

But the greatest privilege is to be drawn in this age, as we will collectively be the bride of Christ mentioned above in Revelation 22:17! 

⁶¹ *The Spirit and the bride*, in unison, referring to the time period **after** the marriage of Christ to the Church. Other believers at that time also, (those who hear) encourage all others to ‘*Come*’! Clearly referring to the Millennial Age!

⁶² See Ezekiel 37. Chapter 4, a companion to this expands on this development. “*When Gods’ Spirit is Poured Out*”.

Using the HOLY SPIRIT

Smug Security or Creative Risk?

The Holy Spirit makes possible the development of righteous character. But comfortable complacency can mean a smug security instead of extending oneself. The parable of the talents helps explain the difference.

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In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, Jesus teaches that we should be in a state of expectancy for His return (Matthew 25:1-13). The illustration that follows, the parable of the talents, shows *what* we should be doing while awaiting that return. Christ gave the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to make possible spiritual growth. He takes care to provide all the necessary tools. He committed to His Church authority and gave His truth, laws and future promises, plus the invisible Divine power to accomplish spiritual growth.

The talents are expressed in monetary terms, but refer to spiritual values. For our purpose, let's accept a talent as a thousand dollars. Christ's rich gifts are, however, purchased in His blood—something far beyond monetary value. Christ came as our Savior. Firstfruit Christians are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit and are to be busy using that Spirit to grow and transform.

The parable explains the Kingdom of God. *"It's also like a man going off on an extended trip. He called his servants together and delegated responsibilities. To one he gave five thousand dollars, to another two thousand, to a third one thousand, depending on their abilities. Then he left"* (Matt. 25:14-15, The Message paraphrase used throughout).

By the uniqueness of birth each of us has different abilities, mental processes and physical and spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit influences and provides an unseen power for the spiritual use of our natural abilities. This spiritual investment is to be put to good use according to our individual

ability from birth and from later training in life. God doesn't place a heavier burden on our shoulders than we can bear. He gives us a task, and we are to get on with it. As Christians, we all have different opportunities and capacities, dispositions and personalities. Our situations are not identical. This shows that Christ knows us individually—knows our temperaments, our strengths, abilities, family obligations, personal skills and mental skill. No other human knows precisely what another's responsibility is. But each is ultimately responsible to Christ at the judgment.

Two Servants Did Well

"Right off, the first servant went to work and doubled his master's investment. The second did the same" (verses 16-17).

These two servants doubled their spiritual capital, and Christ was happy with what each accomplished. They went and traded—immediately got busy. They applied themselves to their task. They lost no time. There was work to be done in transforming their hearts, attitudes, thinking and choices in life.

Having made right spiritual investment choices, they continued in that direction. They sought the Kingdom first, sublimated personal desires and dedicated everything in their life to honor God's calling and way of life. They took risks in their personal lives (time and money) to make sure they could attend Church services, fellowship, help spread the gospel, be involved in Church activities and grow in Bible study and prayer.

This was their main focus. It had a personal cost. It involved a risk. They were prepared to pay it. They developed themselves spiritually. From novices at baptism, through the Holy Spirit, they went on to grow and develop.

The one with the five talents was expected to achieve more. He had more, so was expected to accomplish more. Because of greater ability, he was expected to go to greater pain and trouble in extending himself more. It was not sufficient for him to cruise along in smug comfort and security. The servant with only two talents was not expected to produce beyond what he could. If he did the best he could with what he had, it still produced the same percentage—double.

How does the term *creative risk* apply here? James helps explain it by saying: "*For if anyone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like a man studying his natural face in a mirror. For he studied himself and went his way, and immediately he forgot what he was like*" (James 1:23-24, Modern KJV).

To take creative risk is to open up oneself to challenges. It sees the self and determines to change what is personally needed. Few of us are comfortable at stepping into unfamiliar territory. Yet to grow, we sometimes have to be prepared to risk our fears. And God's Spirit will not let us down. It may be uncomfortable, it may mean embarrassment, feeling awkward, even foolish.

Over the history of God's Church few of us have wanted to confront speaking in public. It represented a creative risk to step up to a lectern and face an audience. But the risk of doing so paid off.

Some years ago one of the ladies who volunteer-ed to do phoning for the waiting room program was afterward terrified at what she had let herself in for. She was concerned about how she would cope with a "No." She prayed about it. Her first call responded by saying, "Oh, that would be lovely. Thank you." Her calls thereafter weren't without some anxiety, but the ice was broken, and she moved on to a higher level of personal development.

We risk pain to do what is right. We risk pain to confront unsavory things within ourselves. But

from these risks we grow, produce and increase our talents.

The Third Wouldn't Risk Himself

"But the man with the single thousand dug a hole and carefully buried his master's money. "After a long absence, the master of those three servants came back and settled up with them. The one given five thousand dollars showed him how he had doubled his investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'"

"The servant with the two thousand showed how he also had doubled his master's investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'" "The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent'." (Matthew 25:18-25).

The third servant is severely rebuked. Why? Because he hadn't earned a lot of money for his employer? No, the parable doesn't say this. It is possible he might have been commended even if he had gained only a little, providing that he had sincerely tried. He did not mispend or embezzle or squander the money. He simply hid it. But a hidden talent is no good to anybody.

Is a spiritual talent only for one's own personal benefit and need? That he hid the money implies he was aware it was not his. Similarly, the Holy Spirit belongs to God, and He can take it away. When we receive the Holy Spirit, we are stewards of its work in our lives.

Here in this parable we have two servants who are busy developing their talents and being successful in spiritual development. The third servant **remains spiritually comfortable in the smug security of having received the truth and God's Spirit, but he doesn't have the motivation for any further effort.** The zeal of the others did not rub off to inspire him to any action.

The heart of the parable is that we must strive to

produce fruits of the Holy Spirit. The two servants who were successful risked their spiritual capital to produce. They stepped out in faith and trusted God for the result. The third servant could have done the same, but didn't. Instead he was satisfied with what he had received; he had the truth, had access to the Holy Spirit, had a fellowship—what more was needed?

"The master was furious. 'That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers, where at least I would have gotten a little interest'" (verses 26-27).

The third servant reveals a fearful, negative attitude in living as a true Christian. He recognizes that God is his master, but he has the frame of mind that God is demanding and unfair. He buried the money for safekeeping so that it couldn't be lost. This way he wouldn't be accountable for squandering it. He was safety minded and showed concern for his own protection. He didn't want to risk stepping out into an unknown where he might appear foolish or make mistakes.

Fear has been at the heart of our human psyche from the time of Adam and Eve. Yet often the fear of having to face the same fears again is enough to change the direction in our lives. We can say today "never again," which means we do not want to face the same experiences, attitudes, penalties or tensions. So we change.

The smallness of his one talent did not excuse him from failing to make use of it. We will not be called to account for what we couldn't do, but for what we have received. The third servant is comfortable with not having lost what he was given. He confesses, though, to burying his talent, of hiding it. Perhaps he expects praise for having kept it in a safe place and that he didn't hazard losing it.

But doesn't an attitude of mind emerge here? He fearfully viewed God's way as too harsh. Having received God's love and forgiveness, he had assumed life would be easier without effort on his part. His fears reveal a false notion about God—that if he attempted to develop more, he would also have to answer to being more responsible.

Christ's judgment illustrates that it is not sufficient to just give back what was given, but to make good use of it and improve. When Christ says He would have been happy with just bank interest, it indicates He would have been satisfied if the servant had just tried, even if accomplishing only a little. Instead this servant elected for safety and smug comfort. The others risked of themselves to make personal change and to grow.

Creative Risk

"Take the thousand and give it to the one who risked the most. And get rid of this 'play-it-safe' who won't go out on a limb" (verse 28).

In effect, what Christ is saying is that what one will not do, someone else will end up doing. If we fail to be accountable for the Holy Spirit in our lives, then it will be given to someone else. Spiritual progress comes from taking the risk of struggling to diminish the negatives in your human nature, confronting your self-justification, facing denial and examining your motives in your spiritual life.

Growth in developing the fruit of the Holy Spirit means moving on to a deeper understanding and love for God's law (Psalm 119:97-104). It means walking in a deeper relationship with God through meaningful prayer and fasting. It means exploring an ever-increasing humility and self-assessment (Psalm 131:1; Phil. 2:3). It involves an increasing dedication to be accountable and forgiven for past mistakes, attitudes and motives.

Christ does set the high level for which we are to strive. And that involves the frightening task of facing up to ourselves, of hearing what others say about us, of seeing ourselves as others see us, of recognizing our pride, our blind spots, our irritations, our areas of temptation, our fears, inadequacies, loneliness and our human inability to communicate much beyond our human limitations.

The Holy Spirit is too important to neglect. The parable of the talents helps us examine if we live in smug security, or if we exercise a creative risk in developing our spiritual talents. If we do take the risk, the unseen power of God will help us—guaranteed. **UN**

What Was the Early Church's Understanding Regarding "the TRINITY"?

Profound Theological Considerations Factored into the Christian Thought Stream after the Second Century. Hidden Within the Historical Record is a Picture of What the Early New Testament Church ACTUALLY Believed! (Part One)

Among the number of theological 'issues' that the churchgoing public typically accepts, and without giving adequate scrutiny, is the matter of how many Beings comprise the Godhead. Longstanding conceptions, from the ancient pagan religious world, overlaid upon the deeply embedded monotheistic Judaic belief system, (out of which most of the earliest Christians had come), were fundamentally challenged by a whole new understanding brought into the picture by the Person and ministry of Jesus the Christ. Who He was, and who He had been, (and IF He had been prior to the first century) created a whole new foundation for Faith that believers struggle to define to the present day.

When investigating the origins of the teachings regarding the "Nature of God" as they existed from the fourth century onward, we find some very interesting admissions from its proponents! Not all is as is commonly reported.

What Is Traditionally Taught

By way of general introduction, the following explanatory paragraphs presented - in different type-style - are gleaned from the *Wikipedia* site on the internet on the subject of the Trinity.

"The [Christian doctrine](#) of the Trinity teaches the unity of [Father](#), [Son](#), and [Holy Spirit](#) as three persons in [one Godhead](#). The doctrine, one of the most important in the Christian faith, states that [God](#) is the Triune God, existing as three persons, or in the [Greek hypostases](#), but as one being. Saying that God exists as three persons but is one God means that God the Son and God the Holy Spirit exactly duplicate the nature or being of God the Father in every way. Whatever attributes or power God the Father has, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit have as well. "Thus, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are also eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, infinitely wise, infinitely holy, infinitely loving, omniscient." Now, we should ask ourselves, why is this 'doctrine' regarded as "...one of the most important in the Christian faith."? Considering the fact that the early Church had no such declaration, and nothing is said in any New Testament writing to clearly define the doctrine, as it was later established, **would it in any way have hindered their attainment of salvation to not have known what centuries later came to be declared as 'essential'?** The next paragraph admits as much, that the early Church had no conception of any 'triune nature'.

"The [New Testament](#) does not have an explicit doctrine of the Trinity. However, emphasizes that the New Testament does repeatedly speak of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit to "compel a trinitarian understanding of God." This might be considered the case, if there was mention of the Holy Spirit functioning as a distinct and separate entity with an individual mentality, but that isn't the way God's Spirit is represented in scripture!

"The **doctrine developed** from the biblical language used in New Testament passages such as the baptismal formula in [Matthew 28:19](#) and **took substantially its present form by the end of the 4th century** as a result of controversies in which some theologians, when speaking of God, used terms such as "person", "nature", "essence", "substance",

terms that had never been used by the [Apostolic Fathers](#), in a way that the Church authorities considered to be erroneous." This is interesting, in that it admits the doctrine was created in response to use of terms which certain religious leaders regarded as 'erroneous'. **Our consideration is whether such 'error' was corrected, or compounded.** It also identifies the end of the fourth century as the 'substantial development' date, not the beginning of the fourth, as is commonly represented, as we see in the paragraphs below.

"To the ancients, **personhood** "was in some sense individual, but always in community as well." Each person is understood as having the one identical essence or nature, not merely similar natures. **The being of Christ, can be said to have dominated theological discussions and councils of the church through the 7th century A.D., and resulted in the Nicene and Constantinopolitan creeds.**" Notice here, the primary controversy is admitted to have centered around Christ and His state of being. Consideration of the nature of the Holy Spirit came under consideration a full generation **later!** We'll see the importance of that as we move on.

"Since the beginning of the [third century](#) the doctrine of the Trinity has been stated as "the **one God** exists in three Persons and [one substance](#), Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." (As noted above, not entirely true! The concept of a 'third person' was **not** the focal issue leading up to the first Nicene Council in 325 AD.)

"Trinitarianism, belief in the Trinity, is **a mark of [Roman Catholicism](#), [Eastern](#) and [Western Orthodoxy](#) as well as of the "mainstream traditions"** arising from the [Protestant Reformation](#), such as [Anglicanism](#), [Baptist](#), [Methodism](#), [Lutheranism](#) and [Presbyterian-ism](#). The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church describes the Trinity as "the central **dogma** of [Christian theology](#)". In this paragraph, we find deference to a 'later refined' doctrine as though it had been defined and present from the onset of the controversy. We will see that this is not the case.

The Original Controversy

"[Tertullian](#), a Latin theologian who wrote in the early 3rd century, (early 200's AD) is credited with using the words "Trinity", "person" and "substance" to explain that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are "one in essence —**not one in Person**". We should pause to note the gist of this statement. Tertullian's statement dealt with the **source** of these three Persons' existence, not their singularity of Being! Tertullian recognized distinctly separate Persons!

"About a century later, in 325, the [First Council of Nicaea](#) established the doctrine of the Trinity as [orthodoxy](#) and adopted the [Nicene Creed](#), which described **Christ** as "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance (homo-ousios) with the Father". Again, though the sentence above misrepresents the facts (the Nicene Creed, as we know it today, wasn't formalized in 325, the personhood of the Holy Spirit factored into the discussions much later), it is important to note that the statement positively emphasized the Divinity of Christ. "Being of one substance" considers His state of Being, the means of His existence, not His being the same Being as the Father. That substance being Spirit. Both the Father and the Son derive their existence from the Spirit dimension, what is also referred to as the Divine Nature! But, that doesn't make them one and the same Being.

The Father and the Son

"The concept of Trinitarianism came about 300 years after Jesus' passing when certain views considered heretical, such as [Arianism](#), were coming to prominence. In 325, the [Council of Nicaea](#) adopted a term for **the relationship between the Son and the Father** that from then on was seen as the hallmark of orthodoxy; it declared that the Son is "of the same substance" ([ὁμοούσιος](#)) as the Father." Note, at first, the controversy focused around the relationship between the Father and the Son! "This was **further developed** into the formula "three persons, one substance". Notice, the adoption of a term was not "trinity" but the Greek word: "homoousios", indicating the belief that the Father and Son were of identical substance. We can see from this that an additional

consideration of the Holy Spirit as a ‘third person’ was not on the table originally! “The answer to the question "What is God?" indicates the one-ness of the divine nature, while the answer to the question "Who is God?" indicates the three-ness of "Father, Son and Holy Spirit". The subtlety of this statement often escapes the average believer. A singularity of Nature (that each ‘Person’ exists of the same spirit essence) does not preclude separate individual Beings, if we discern the intent of their originally declared statement!

Let’s pause at this point and consider the implications of what the Trinitarian persuasion admits: That the controversy **originally** involved the **separate** Persons of the Father and the Son, their relationship to one another, and their existing of one *Divine Essence*: Spirit. Consideration of a “Holy Spirit” as a ‘third Person’ was injected into the controversy only later, and then reflected back by modern believers, as though present from the beginning. We’ll see this further confirmed in the quoted article.

Centuries of Conceptualizations

Though there were several arguments on the Nature of God within the Church by the third and fourth centuries, two positions dominated dialog. They were the understandings put forth by deacon Athanasius, later bishop of Alexandria, and Doctor Arias, a Christian presbyter, also from Alexandria, and had much more to do with the Nature of the Son than consideration of the idea of three Beings.³⁹ The footnote below sets forth the formal declaration of the **Council of Nicaea** in 325 AD, and as is clearly evident, no explicit consideration of a separate personhood for the Holy Spirit was then undertaken.⁴⁰ That was more definitively addressed in the next Council, which convened at Constantinople, some 56 years later.

An important confirming admission is that “The Confession of the **Council of Nicaea said little about the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the **divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit was developed by Athanasius in the last decades of his life.**** (40 years after Nicaea) He defended and **refined** the Nicene formula. By the **end** of the 4th century, under the leadership of ...the **Cappadocian Fathers**, the doctrine had reached substantially its current form.” So we can see that a triune Godhead, as is represented today, was not formulated until the **late** fourth century. It is often represented as though it was readily accepted from the start. That perception needs to be corrected.

Athanasius versus Arias

It was the internal polarizations of primarily two persuasions, the Athanasian and Arian views, that created the need for resolution. In addition, other religious philosophies overlaid and affected peoples’ perceptions to varying degree.

³⁹ “PROFESSION OF FAITH OF THE 318 FATHERS

1. We believe in one God the Father all powerful, maker of all things both seen and unseen. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten begotten from the Father, that is from the substance [Gr. ousias, Lat. substantia] of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten [Gr. gennethenta, Lat. natum] not made [Gr. poethenta, Lat. factum], CONSUBSTANTIAL [Gr. homoousion, Lat. unius substantiae (quod Graeci dicunt homousion)] with the Father, through whom all things came to be, both those in heaven and those in earth; for us humans and for our salvation he came down and became incarnate, became human, suffered and rose up on the third day, went up into the heavens, is coming to judge the living and the dead. And in the holy Spirit.

2. And those who say

1. "there once was when he was not", and "before he was begotten he was not", and that
2. he came to be from
 - things that were not, or
 - from another hypostasis [Gr. hypostaseos] or substance [Gr. ousias, Lat. substantia], affirming that the Son of God is subject to change or alteration these the catholic and apostolic church anathematises.”

⁴⁰ Though Tertullian a century before insisted the Father and the Son, though singular in essence, yet were not singular in person! (See bottom left of page 28)

Athanasian view: God as Father and Son, (later revised from a two-person view to include three persons, largely as is regarded today). Later developments created the “single Being expressed in three manifestations” (hupostases) idea, while others identified with the “three separate Beings - somehow unified in One” concept!

Arianism: God in two persons, with the Father and Son as separate Beings, the Son subordinate to the Father, and that the Word did not have eternal pre-existence.

Unitarianism: Only God the Father is God, thus, that Christ was not and is not God. It was the carryover of the Jewish definition of ‘monotheism’ that had great effect on later developments of Christian theology regarding the Nature of God.

Marcionites: Another influential sect of the second century held that the God of the OT (Father) was a different Being than the God of the NT (Son), each exhibiting demonstrably different personalities. Though incorrectly assigning identities, it bears evidence of a general acceptance of a “two-Beings” idea, one which remains embedded in the deepest perceptions of many, even to the present! (That the Father was the God of the Old Testament!)

Gnosticism: Embraced a Metaphysical Dualism: (Hellenism was Gnostic!) A belief system that held that matter and spirit were contrasting existences. All matter was corrupt and evil / that only things in the spirit dimension could be good (‘righteous’). Judaism had its Gnostic elements as well as did pagan religions, and later, apostate Christian theologies. (Evidence: 1st John 4:2 & 2nd John 7) These show that believing Gnostics held the Divinity of Christ, but had to disassociate Him with any material existence, as nothing of Divine realm could ever associate with or inhabit the physical realm. Their position held that Christ did not have a physical body, only the appearance of one!

The Emperor Constantine Factor

We should remain aware that it was the unconverted Constantine who convened the first council in 325 AD. Not that he had a great interest in Christian Doctrine, but that he saw the value of a united Christianity for the cohesiveness it could add to his political grasp on the eastern Empire. In fact, Constantine was not baptized until on his deathbed in 337 AD. Concurrent with the religious issues dealt with at Nicaea, there was also intent to bring the pagan masses into the Church. And to facilitate that, many common practices were made to appear Christian by making nominal changes to customs already popular with the people.

Summary Observations

The foremost consideration leading up to the Council at Nicaea involved the Nature of Christ. It involved primarily the relationship between and the separate Beings of the Father and the Son, Declarative statements were issued affirming the separate personhoods of the Father and the Son, yet, affirming both existing of a ‘single essence’.

The introduction of a ‘third person’ came along many **decades later**, the New Testament does not explicitly present the Trinity teaching, nor was it articulated much before the **late fourth century**. The Nicene Creed, presented a page earlier, **does not anathematize those who don’t believe in the Holy Spirit as a third person**, while it does specifically anathematize those who deny the pre-incarnate existence of the ever-living Son and His unity of substance with the Father, (See John 17:5)

The Nicene Creed was refined in the late fourth century to become what we find it to read today,


Both Athanasian and Arian views originally conceived of a two-person Godhead. In fact, the Marcionite view clearly did also,

Major segments of early Christianity regarded ‘God the Father’ and ‘God the Son’ as being distinct and separate Persons, having diametrically different roles and personalities.

The early Church did not have a Trinitarian understanding, nor was it so oriented until the mid fourth century. Even after the Council of Constantinople in 381, acceptance of the new doctrine was not universal.

Recently, there have been philosophical attempts to defend the logical coherency of Trinity. Their posed formulation as suggested is free from logical incoherency, but it is debatable whether this formulation is consistent with historical orthodoxy. (As it violates the monotheistic discipline) It is suggested that "the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be thought of as numerically distinct Gods".

Paradoxically Incoherent: "A Mystery"

"The doctrine developed into its present form precisely through confrontation with alternatives; and refinement continues in the same way. Even now, ecumenical dialogue between Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, [Oriental Orthodox](#), the [Assyrian Church of the East](#), Anglican and Trinitarian Protestants, seeks an expression of Trinitarian and Christological doctrine which will overcome the extremely subtle differences that have largely **contributed to dividing them** into separate communities. The doctrine of the **Trinity is therefore symbolic, paradoxically, of division and unity.**" The Trinity Doctrine did not fully unify the Church as intended, but rather divided it irreversibly and erected barriers among the greater majority against attaining a correct understanding of God's ultimate Plan and man's ultimate destiny, to be... "partakers of the Divine Nature"! (2nd Peter 1:4) 

CHAPTER 8

What Was the Early Church's Understanding Regarding "the HOLY SPIRIT"?

Profound Theological Considerations Factored into the Christian Thought Stream after the Second Century. The New Testament presents a Comprehensive Picture of What the Early New Testament Church ACTUALLY Believed! (Part Two)

In the first installment of this subject, Chapter 8, "Regarding the Trinity", we saw from reliable historical sources, the admission that the Trinity Doctrine, as it's known today, **is not** what the early Church understood, or even conceived of in their day. Several key admissions included the fact that the Holy Spirit was not presented as a 'person' at the first ecumenical council of Nicaea in 325 AD, nor did their resulting statement represent such a position. We saw that it was Bishop Athanasius who, in the last decades of his life, (the early 370's) developed the understanding of "**the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit**". (Wikipedia)

Not for 300 Years!

In that the concept of a 'triune' Godhead wasn't developed until the late 4th century, we're forced to

conclude that the **early Christians were in no way hindered from true and full conversion by not having such a concept as an essential centerpiece of their theology.** That leaves us to wonder how such a teaching as the 'triune nature' of God, if it is as 'essential' to ones' salvation as modern theologians insist, how is it so essential?

We can see from the wording of the original Nicene Creed that an understanding of the existence of the Son and His relationship with God the Father was primarily the matter at issue. Sources also admit that the Nicene Creed was **altered later** to the statement we find today.

From other contemporaries, we can also see that it was the dual nature that was at issue, most importantly, the nature of the Son as a separate

Person from the Father, and the matter of His eternal pre-existence and Divinity. One major persuasion saw the two Beings as distinct and separate, but of one and the same essence, while another persuasion saw the Son as Divine, but having had no existence prior to His incarnation!

From church leaders such as Marcion, in the mid-second century, we also see the persuasion that the God of the Old Testament was a distinctly different Being than the God of the New, with Marcion assigning them different personalities, one stern and harsh, the other loving and gracious.

From these records, we can see that the early Church was very conversant with the understanding that the Father and the Son were two distinct and separate Persons. From the official statement of the first Nicene Council, we see that they regarded these two as unified in one *essence* (existing of the same Spirit), (some used the word: ‘*substance*’) not a single Being, but among some, the Son was not God, as prevailing Judaic theology would have insisted.

The Father and the Son

The next chapter, “*The Doctrine of the Father and the Son*” shows those many places where such a doctrine is referred to in the New Testament. To address the question as to the Divinity of the Son, refer to other titles on the subject, such as “*What Christ Said About Himself*” (#178); “*Who WAS the God of the Old Testament?*” (#75); and “*How Many Beings?*” (#122, also in booklet form).

We can see from many New Testament passages that the issue was WHO exactly was the Son? By the instant condemnation by the Sanhedrin, at Christ’s trial, we can see what they understood Him to be alleging. That **He also WAS God!** This, of course, was highly problematical with the Jewish persuasion, who regarded God as strictly a single Being, and also the Gnostic persuasion, who disallowed that anything Divine could ever be formed of the material world (‘incarnate’: flesh, in other words). We see a glimpse into the Gnostic views related in places such as 1st John 4:3 and 2nd John 7. In order to allow Christ’s Divinity, Gnostics felt compelled to disallow His physicality. Now, one would think that this was at least in part commendable, but, no, John calls this

‘*the spirit of antichrist!*’ Why? We must deduce that His also being **of** flesh (what we call ‘the incarnation’) was a vital factor in His earthly manifestation, and to disregard that fact would leave a major part of His ministry, His Priesthood and His essential Blood Sacrifice invalid.

But all of the **early** Nicene narratives point us toward the consideration of two Beings, with the primary question being that of the Divinity of Christ. Was Jesus God? The Jew would’ve said, NO!, while the Gnostic, in order to affirm that He was, would have had to insist that He didn’t actually come into a physical form (in the flesh), but only appeared to have a physical body! This is the issue we read of in places such as 2nd John 7.

But how does the Church deal with the issue of Two Beings, in light of a long held ‘monotheistic’ tradition. This question is addressed in Chapter 9: “*The Doctrine of the Father and the Son*”.

Regard for the Holy Spirit

Since the Holy Spirit was not originally represented as a ‘third Person’, separate of the Father and Son, we need to consider what they did understand to be the nature and / or function of God’s Spirit. To them, the matter was not just a theological debate. Their experiences were real, as opposed to our situation, or the situation among ‘wandering luminaries’ of the third century and beyond.

The early Church had profoundly effective experience with the visible and audible outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, (Acts 2) and a generation later at Caesarea, (Acts 10). Christ had rehearsed with them what to expect (John 20:22), explaining of His Spirit’s comforting, empowering and upholding characteristic. They understood His Spirit as being an entity into which they would eventually become ‘born’ and would initially internalize, not just a ‘person’ with whom to relate.

Questions of Logical Coherency


“Recently, there have been philosophical attempts to defend the logical coherency of Trinity, by posing a formulation free from its usual logical incoherency, but it is debatable whether this formulation is consistent with historical orthodoxy. Regarding the formulation suggested, not all philosophers would agree with its logical coherency. It has been suggested that

"the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be thought of as numerically **distinct** Gods", suggesting that "a coherent statement of the doctrine is possible on the assumption that identity is "always relative to a sortal term". (Quoted from Wikipedia Encyclopedia)

Continuing... "Some Messianic groups, the Branch Davidian, and even some scholars within (but not necessarily representing) denominations such as the Southern Baptist Convention view the Trinity as being **comparable to a family**, hence the familial terms of Father, Son, (with no familial term for the Holy Spirit.) The Hebrew word for "God", **Elohim, which has an inherent plurality**, has the function as a surname as in Yahweh Elohim." This is not all that different from the understanding long set forth among the Churches of God. Is the Protestant world bringing it back around full circle?

Addressing the Jewish Position

"The seeming contradiction of Elohim being "one" is solved by the fact that the Hebrew word for "one", **echad** ("one of"), may even **describe a compound unity**, harmonious in direction and purpose; unlike **yachid** ("only") which **means singularity**."⁸¹ With that awareness, the Shema, found in Deut. 6:4, the foundation upon which Judaic Unitarianism (strict monotheism) is built, had it intended we declare God to be a **single** Being only, the latter Hebrew word, **yachid**, would've been used, not the former!

But it's the Council texts themselves, presented in the previous chapter, which reveal that the early Church had no such intent to declare a separate 'person' of Gods' Holy Spirit. 

⁸¹ Strong, James (1999). *Strong's Hebrew Dictionary*. AGES Digital Library. pp. 24, 284. ISBN 0785247246.

A Whole NEW Paradigm:

The Doctrine of ‘the Father and the Son’!

With Volatile Issues abundant, the Early NT Church didn’t need More things to have to Debate. Yet One Issue was Always ‘Right There’ Waiting to Erupt. Few have noted the Extreme Genius Exhibited by New Testament writers in Modifying the Fundamental Perceptual Parameters of Who Elohim Is.

We’re all fully aware that the first century Judaic religion was ‘strictly monotheistic’. That fact was then, and even is now, brought to remembrance by daily repetition of the Shema: Deuteronomy 6:4. However, there was a distinct perceptual shift that occurred with the New Testament era. We’re not as focused on it in this generation, since we’re thoroughly familiar with the matter. But such wasn’t the case in the early Church. What was posed in the early first century was drastically different from what was commonly believed and understood at the time, especially among the Jewish community, in which the former opinions are still tightly embraced.

Among those who know of the major ‘personality’ of the New Testament, and in some manner accept or at least acknowledge Him, they often make a point with emphasis that the Father is identified in many places distinct from Jesus Christ. The Father is called God, but the Son, they say, is not. Their conclusion therefore being that the Son is not God!

Reason Run Amuck

Let’s consider one line of reasoning: Applying the same logic, we must also conclude that the Father is not Lord. There is one God the Father ...and one Lord Jesus Christ, as it says in 1st Corinthians 8:6. So, we have one God AND one Lord. If ‘one’ means there is no other Being called God, (as some allege) then, applying the same logic, the same must be true that there is no other Lord. If each of these is to be understood as exclusive to one specific individual Being,

then we must recognize that there is only one Lord. If there is ONE God only, then correspondingly, there must be only ONE Being who we can legitimately regard as Lord, on the strength of the same logic and the same wording. So, we must never regard anyone but the Father as God, and no one but the Son as Lord. (In fact, the New Testament rarely if ever refers to the Father as the Lord.) So, we have two Beings: one is God, the other is Lord. Neither, it seems, are referred to in the New Testament by the other’s name. (I’m not saying I believe this, I just want to call attention to a thought process that leads to the premise on the part of some that Jesus is Lord but **not** God.)

The LORD God

The problem is, in the Old Testament, we have God consistently referred to as the LORD God! Which is who there? The name LORD God is the major personal mention. There, whoever the LORD is, was also God! So, prior to the New Testament Church era, we have a Being who was identified by BOTH names! What changed?

Contradicting that opinion, apparently both God and Lord in the New Testament can be worshipped! (Romans 14:11, Eph. 3:14, Phil. 2:10) Does this clear fact ‘confuse’ the first commandment issue? Believe it or not, that claim has been made, that it violates the First Commandment to worship any other than the LORD God of the Old Testament, who is generally identified by them as being God the Father!

But we also do have the Father specifically calling the Son, ‘God’, with the Book of Hebrews quoting an Old Testament passage that says so, and making it explicitly clear that that’s who He meant. The Father calls Jesus God! He’d know! Hebrews 1:8-9 quotes Psalm 45, saying: “*But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*” (So, here we have God talking to God!)

The Creator YHWH God

Another not-so subtlety: Those who present a ‘Unitarian’ view of God often use the name: ‘*Creator YHWH God*’. A phrase or combination of names not found anywhere in the Bible, New Testament or Old. Bringing these names together, they then present that as proof that we’re talking about **only** the Father, and then draw a conclusion appropriate to that understanding. Truth is, we can find YHWH as applying to either Being. YHWH means LORD, which when we slide into the New Testament, Lord is the name predominantly specific to the Son.

Merging in the name ‘*Creator*’, as some are inclined to do, doesn’t add clarity or affirmation that we’re talking about the Father only! In fact, it confuses the issue, as the Being who became the Son was the one **by whom** God the Father made all that is.⁸² It was at least a collaborative effort: (“*Let US make man in our image and after OUR likeness.*” (Gen. 1:26)) To suggest that the Father ALONE created all things, not involving the Son, is blatantly unbiblical. But, of course, that requires that we understand that the Being who later became the Son was ‘*with God and was God*’, alive and from the beginning fully cognitive. Not all ascribe to that!

It’s in this ‘*Unitarian*’ (strict monotheistic) position, found even today, that we can see some of the ‘problem’ that was in the theological environment of the early New Testament Church era. We need to realize that the issues of the first

century were not all the same ones we have today. (Since Nicea, we’ve been occupied with the unresolved questions regarding the Nature of God generated in part by the non-acceptance of God actually being in the flesh!) Deferring to this provocative consideration, the early writers chose carefully how to represent the Truth as it was becoming understood, after the Son had come and revealed the Father. Instead of upending prevailing opinion among their (formerly Jewish) converts, they chose to introduce the Truth in an undeniable but revealing way. Thus the doctrine referred to as “the Father and the Son”, consistently calling the Father, *God* and the Son, *Lord*, the other component of the familiar OT two-name: *LORD God*. (Posing it another way, was there no perceptual difference before and after the Son revealed the Father? Obviously there was!)

We need also to realize the religious climate of the day. They had other looming ‘biggies’ also: ceremonial Law-keeping, circumcision, baptism of Gentiles, the Faith as opposed to Works factor, etc. They didn’t need to stoke the ‘Two Being’ controversy, which obviously remained extremely volatile, even deadly, as evidenced by Jesus’ condemnation and the violent reaction at Stephen’s stoning. They packaged and presented the new revelation as benignly as they could. That explains the repetitive reference to the doctrine of “the Father and the Son”, as we’ll see below. Jesus Himself made specific reference to it! (John 17:3), as had His mother decades earlier! (Luke 1:46-47) There was a subtle change to the perceptual dynamic. As some today would put it, ‘**a whole new paradigm**’!

Most converts of the first generation were predominantly of Jewish persuasion, with that indelible component in their thinking: that God was one single Being only. The Apostles and early Church had to package the new idea in a way that would be both accurate yet acceptable without provoking a volatile reaction. They were adding a new player. They referred to that new player (new to their conceptualization) as God! Who would reject that? But the ‘second’ Being, (who in fact was the Being they’d known of throughout their history) was presented as “the Son of God”, which had Old Testament basis

⁸² John 1:3, Hebrews 1:2

already. (Ps. 45:6-7, Heb. 1:8-9, Isa. 9:6) That was provocative enough for the time. But, every once in a while the full picture peeked thru, that the Son was also God! As their faith grew, the 'objectionableness' of that faded in the Church, though it didn't within the Jewish community.

The Messiah was recognized increasingly, but He was also called 'Lord'! They were left with two Beings to worship. They were taught to pray to the Father in the name of the Son! They were assured that the Son would return to Earth in like manner as they had seen Him go, but that the Father would remain in heaven **until after** the Millennium, until the Lake of Fire at the end had done its work. (Even consuming the institution of Death itself! (Rev. 20:14)) Then the Father would come and assume direct control over all things. (1st Corinthians 15:28). The early Church saw the wisdom of **not** hammering the subject specifically. Rather, they opted to word it in a way that was non-provocative, yet revealing.

Yet Another Paradigm

Even as late as 325 AD at Nicea, the increasingly apostate theologians didn't have the explicit and specific scriptural proof they desired, to 'solidify' their doctrinal opinions. They wobbled between two opinions, each flawed in different ways. That of Dr. Arias prevailed at first, but by the second Council, a generation later, that of Athanasius ultimately prevailed, bequeathing what developed into 'Trinitarianism' as we have it today.

Trinitarians had by then devised a way to present God's Nature where they could subtly reject the idea that God had **come into** the flesh, by posing that God was a single Being who manifests Himself in any of three spirit 'hypostases'. (A physical Being **can not** be a 'hypostasis' of a Spirit Being! So, that must be false!) With that idea and with the Hellenistic (Gnostic) immortal soul, the apostasy was by then fully on its way!

The early Church had to present a conceptual shift, and chose to do so by taking one of the names in the two-name moniker common in the Scriptures, (they only had the Old Testament prior to the mid 60's AD) and applying it to one Being while using the other in near exclusive application to the other Being. Knowing the

sentiments of the day, this has all the appearances of pure genius. Without calling point blank attention to the two-person concept, the hearers could put two and two together, gradually coming to get the point on their own. Would that we today were that discerning!

God is given top billing, but the Lord an equal. As the early converts began to realize who Jesus was in His prior relationship to the nation, the 'LORD God' of the OT, (actually one of a two-some) they were chinked into a position where they couldn't reject either Being! God ain't stupid! The remaining 'problem' is entirely our doing! Think about Isaiah 9:6. The Son is "*the Everlasting Father, the Mighty God*" of the physical nation. How could they reject Him as God, realizing this?

God is OUR Father

The Apostle Paul begins nearly all of his epistles by telling us that God is our Father, and by drawing a distinction between God, and the Son of man (the Son of God): Jesus. That frequent reminder was not without specific purpose!

There are a couple of things we should discern from that! It was important to make it clear that Jesus was, for the purpose of effecting remission of our sins, **able** to die. That was just as important as the earlier 'monotheistic' consideration. After all, without His substitutionary death, all of this is irrelevant so far as our obtaining remission of sin is concerned. The idea of God having 'come into the flesh', John identified as being a most essential doctrine. (1st John 2:22)

The person who denies that Jesus is the Christ is a liar. But he that denies "the Father and the Son" is an **antichrist**. Why do we see this **quantum leap** in seriousness? Do we understand his point? There is a doctrine. It's called "*the Father and the Son*", for lack of a better term. That's what Paul and John (even Jesus in John 17:3) used to identify what they were trying to get across. The term '*bi-theism*' (or for that matter '*mono-theism*') hadn't yet been created. The best way he could word it at that early date was to refer to the matter as the doctrinal understanding of "*the Father and the Son*". That was the key to understanding their Nature!

Paul made the same emphasis, in so many places, referring to “the Father **and** the Son”. He called attention to this conceptual discipline, of there being two Beings, referring to it as essential to our salvation, one of whom was in the flesh for a necessary purpose. That is most likely why you see Paul using the term so often and in so many different ways. He also believed and taught “the Father and the Son” idea. That perceptual base that we later came to call ‘monotheism’ is ‘qualified and defined’ by this teaching. That we must believe IN “the Father and the Son”. In BOTH, a **duality**, not just one alone! The two are **not** one-and-the-same Being as one form of Trinitarianism declares!

There is another perceptual development in “the Father and Son” doctrine that we should take note of. We’ve believed as we do for so long, the obvious point doesn’t stand out today as emphatically as it did then. Our perceptions aren’t changing, but theirs were! We understand the Father to be a separate Being of the Son. But prior to Jesus physical incarnation, the God of the Old Testament was thought of as being their ‘father’. (Isaiah 9:6) This was true in a sense, but He wasn’t the Being that the Son would ultimately reveal as His or **our** Father. The existence of this other Being, the TRUE Father, was generally unknown until He was revealed by the Son’s ministry. That earlier Deity, known as God in the Old Testament, was the same One who later became born of flesh. This is the second thing we are compelled to discern!

The Apostle John saw the significance of John the Baptist’s pre-announcement and repeated it in John 1:18. “*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*” This declaration was to be one of the main features in Christ’s ministry.

Revealing the Father

The TRUE Father was largely outside of the field of man’s perception UNTIL the Son came to reveal Him! No man at any time had ever seen or heard the Father. “...*Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape.*” (John 5:37 & 6:46 (John 1:18)) Had they seen or heard, there would be no need to make

this statement, as **it would make Christ a liar!** They might have THOUGHT they had, but they hadn’t! The Being they and their ancestors had dealt with was the Being who for a time, **became flesh** and dwelt among men, even among ‘His own’! (John 1:11)

As perhaps a first step in presenting this subject is John the Baptist’s revelation that “*no man has seen God at any time.*” A disturbing comment to some and an intriguing one to inquiring disciples. It was further enhanced by Jesus’ comments, recorded in Matthew 11:27: “*...and no man knows the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and **he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.***” A full and correct awareness of the existence of and the separate purposes of the two Beings is not common knowledge. There is an identity factor that requires ‘revelation’.

But even earlier, in fact a generation earlier, shortly into her first trimester, Mary acknowledged something interesting: Luke records her exclamation. (Keep in mind that Luke wasn’t an eye-witness to this. His decision to preserve what he recognized as important was written some 60 years **after** the fact.) Mary said: “*My soul doth magnify the **Lord**, And my spirit hath rejoiced in **God my Saviour.***” (Lk. 1:46-47) She at this time was referring to the fetal life-form within her! Her Savior God (the Lord) was within her! Elizabeth also acknowledged her as the mother of her **Lord**, just three verses earlier! Notice: Mary refers to her unborn child as “the Lord my God”!

But the focal issue in all of this is the clear distinction between two Beings: One being the Father and the other being the Son. We see here an early introduction of the conceptualization of ‘the Father and the Son’, likely around the beginning of 5 B.C.

Jesus also clearly encapsulated the conceptualization in His prayer just after His last Passover on Earth. (In John 17:1-3.) “*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**: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many*

as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true **God**, and **Jesus Christ**, whom thou hast sent.”⁸³

Paul also saw need to define their conceptualization this way: “*But to us there is but one God, **the Father**, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.*” (1st Cor. 8:6) (We touched on this one earlier.) If we punctuated this only slightly differently, putting a colon after the word God, we could see this as saying the one true God **is** composed of “the Father and the Son”. Our translators weren’t so perceptive or so bold. BUT, it IS what most Christians believe, nevertheless!! (Note: The original Greek manuscripts did not contain the punctuation we see in its translation.)

New Testament Epistles are hereafter infused with multiple repetitions of the phrase “*the Father and the Son*”. If there were any other phrases so often repeated, we’d have emphasized them as major doctrines long ago. Why does this one fall so far off the radar screen? So many times we see the two distinct Persons mentioned in the same breath! Notice just some of them:

Rom.15:6 *That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify **God**, even **the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**.*

2Cor.11:31 *The **God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, which is blessed for evermore, ...*

Rom.16:27 *To **God** only wise, be glory **through Jesus Christ** for ever. Amen.*

1st Cor.1:3 *Grace be unto you, and peace, from **God our Father**, and from the **Lord Jesus Christ**.*

2nd Cor.1:2 *Grace be to you and peace from **God our Father**, and from the **Lord Jesus Christ**.*

Gal.1:1 *Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by **Jesus Christ**, and **God the Father**, who raised him from the dead;)*

Eph.1:2-3 *Grace be to you, and peace, from **God our Father**, and from the **Lord Jesus Christ**. Blessed be the **God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

Eph.1:17 *That **the God of our Lord Jesus Christ**, the **Father** of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of **him**:*

Eph.3:14 *For this cause I bow my knees unto **the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**,*

Eph.5:20 *Giving thanks always for all things unto **God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**; (The way this one is worded, Paul must be alleging that Christ is God as well as the Father!)*

Eph.6:23 *Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from **God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**.*

Php.1:2 *Grace be unto you, and peace, from **God our Father**, and from the **Lord Jesus Christ**.*

Php.2:11 *And that every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of **God the Father**.*

Php.4:19-20 *But **my God** shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by **Christ Jesus**. 20: Now unto **God and our Father** be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (What is Paul indicating by this word structure? Why would he say ‘God and our Father’? Is he making the case that the Father IS God, (was that ever a question?) or is he posing a God in apposition to the other Being, the Father? In other words, is he placing the name ‘God’ where he was indicating the Son? Ponder this one!)*

Col. 1:2-3 *To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from **God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**. 3: We give thanks to **God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, praying always for you, (Here again, contrasting Paul’s word choice in verse 2 as opposed to that in verse 3, verse 2 has ‘the Father and Christ’, but 3 has ‘God and the Father of Christ’. In the re-wording in 3, he seems to be substituting the name ‘God’ where he’s referring to the Son! Is he stressing a subtle point?)*

1st Thes.1:1 *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in **God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ**: Grace be unto you, and peace, from **God our Father**, and the **Lord Jesus Christ**.*

1st Thes.1-9-10 *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the **living and true God**; 10: And to wait for **his Son from heaven**, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. (Why would there be a need to **WAIT** for the Son from heaven in*

⁸³ Emphasis added by boldness.

order to worship the True God? Weren't they doing that already, before?)

1st Thes.3:11 *Now **God** himself and **our Father**, and **our Lord Jesus Christ**, direct our way unto you.*

1st Thes.3:13 *To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before **God**, even **our Father**, at the coming of **our Lord Jesus Christ** with all his saints.*

2nd Thes.1:12 *That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of **our God and the Lord Jesus Christ**.*

1st Tim.1:2 *Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from **God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord**.*

1st Tim.2:5 *For there is **one God**, and **one mediator** between God and men, the man **Christ Jesus**;*

2nd Tim.1:2 *To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from **God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord**.*

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

Philemon 1:3 *Grace to you, and peace, from **God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**.*

Heb.1:1-3 ***God**...Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his **Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3: Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his **person**,⁸⁴ and **upholding** all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (Notice: v.3 exhibits two ways these two Beings are identical, then two ways they are distinct, then shows one sitting at the right hand of the other!)*


Again and Again and Again

Why did the Apostle Paul see need to present the idea of '*the Father and the Son*' so frequently

⁸⁴ This word 'person' is the Greek: '*hypostasis*', a word meaning 'substantiator', thus suggesting a Being working to uphold the work of another. See my article: "*The Hypostatis Hoax*" for more on this! Notice, the very next phrase defines the term *hypostasis*: "upholding all things"!

and so emphatically? This is the question we need to answer. It wasn't just to employ stentorian 'Biblical Prose'. It was an essential doctrinal component in developing Christianity. Most of the Church during Paul's ministry were former Jews. Even the Gentiles, called by God, many at least, were former Jewish proselytes. They had some background in Judaic beliefs. It was essential that he (and the other Apostles) bring Jesus into the picture in His appropriate role and regard. Jewish concepts were inadequate for this of and by themselves. This is demonstrated in their official and continual rejection of Him as their Messiah, AND their determination to kill Him for claiming even the faintest degree of "equality"! "*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.*" Have we noticed that the use of the term "*my Father*" establishes EQUALITY? They did!

Honor Matters

Those who worship God the Father only, recognizing Jesus with anything less than full equality to God, no matter how sincerely, remain faced with a powerful consideration having serious implications. Part of acceptable worship of God must include an equal regard for the Son. (John 5:22-25) "*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23: That **all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honours not the Son honours not the Father** which hath sent him. 24: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on **him that sent me**, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. 25: Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the **Son of God**: and they that hear shall live.*" Proper regard for God's Son, the Being who **was both seen and heard**, who interfaced with His Creation since Adam, is essential to our salvation and resurrection. The Being most often presented in the Old Testament was Jesus. (Luke 24:37) We wouldn't even fully know of the Father except that the Son had **revealed** Him to us! (John 1:18, 5:39 & 46, John 8:42, Matt. 11:27, Luke 10:22, etc.) 

Considering Monotheism's Limitations

Both Judaic and Christian Persuasions profess to be 'Monotheistic', yet they present very Different Conceptualizations. Are there Biblical Answers to the many Enigmatic Problems we Encounter in these Contrasting Explanations? And Secondly, Is the Truth allowed Adequate Accommodation?

Every 'respected' religion within Christianity and Judaism espouses and affirms being monotheistic. Yet, there is wide divergence of opinion as to just what that term means. Average believers, especially those among Christian persuasions, if pressed, are unable to provide suitable or logical explanations of the theological position they claim so emphatically to espouse.

A Divine Mystery

We have operating within religious societies a discipline which shapes our conceptualization of God. Among those who are 'strict' monotheists, those allowing that there is but One God, in other words, God as just a single Being, they have the easier situation to conceive of and explain, though much also has to be 'explained away'. It is the Christian persuasions, those which accept the New Testament and its clearly stated interrelation and interaction between Beings, who find themselves with the more difficult position to explain yet remaining within the limitations of that discipline. This form of what is identified also as monotheism portrays more than one 'Person' comprising the same Divine Nature. The more deeply the student delves into the accepted belief system, the more it becomes obvious why Christian theologians will tend to decline offering specifics, preferring rather to call the matter a 'Divine Mystery'.

What we have in religion today, and since the first century, is a conceptual configuration that defies clear explanation and can even disallow Biblical Truth. How did this come to be?

Law versus Love

Beside remaining 'within the box' of monotheistic discipline, we have other issues to

accommodate. Not the least of which is the common supposition that the God of the Old Testament is a different Being than the God of the New. Most people have accepted the simple premise that the God of the Old Testament had a very different *nature* than the God of the New. One imposed the Law where the other is regarded as having 'done away' with it! The God of the Old is seen as being very stern toward humankind while Jesus of the New is the much kinder: exhibiting *very* different personalities! So where a Trinitarian might attempt to explain God as a single Being, but who manifests Himself in any of three '*hypostases*',⁸⁵ we can identify one major problem already **if** the 'natures' of these two presentations are so drastically different. Bad enough to explain how three persons are essentially one Person, but then if two of these also have very different natures...? As is obvious, this casual presumption creates havoc with both the strict monotheist, but especially the Trinitarian. Few, it seems, have thought this perception through adequately.

The Tail Wags the Dog?

In many 'scientific' fields, before much data is accumulated, the researchers will set forth a theory, based on the best information available, and then revise or substantiate their original theory as hard data is gathered. Not all fields operate that way, especially those where theological issues are involved. In 'theological' sciences (or God

⁸⁵ A Greek word borrowed from Hebrews 1:3, mistranslated in that one place as '*person*', where it more correctly means substantiation, as we can see from the other places Paul uses the word. See my paper on "*The Hypostasis Hoax*" for more on this important matter.

rejecting fields) the typical approach is to hold the original theory as being sacrosanct, despite the facts, rather than admit to the possible existence of God. (A classic example is the ‘intelligent design’ debate. Here we have enormous evidence of intelligent design, but it’s ruled-out, where there are **no** ‘real missing links’ after all these years, but we must still teach evolutionary theory as though there were!)

What is obvious regarding the monotheism issue is: Mankind settled upon a theory, then developed a concept, then invented a new name for the concept, then gave definition to that name in accordance with his concept. Now he imposes that definition back onto every other item of evidence. The theory is regarded as though it was original truth, though it remains man-made and man-defined. Where the whole process went amiss is when the theory, once pronounced as ‘dogma’ was no longer amenable to any evidence to the contrary. Simply put, if any evidence differs from the now ‘accepted’ position, it must be rejected. Nothing is ‘verifiable’ that falls outside of the established premise.

“Monotheism” is found in pagan religion as much as in Judaic religions. Examples: Babylon and for a time Egypt under Akhenaton (the ‘heretic’ pharaoh) who was contemporary with King Saul. (See the book: *Pharaohs and Kings* by David M. Rohl)⁸⁶ (That means Psalm 110 was written at about the end of Akhenaton’s reign! There are Amarna letters from King Saul’s fading administration in the British Museum which make pleas for help from Akhenaton against David’s forces. So David would have been familiar with what monotheism was when he wrote in Psalm 110 of one God Being speaking to another.) Bottom line here: Every form of ‘monotheism’ is false, except for the one that supposedly originated among the Israelites and which identifies with the God of Israel: *YHWH!*?

The ‘Scientific’ Method

Evolutionists have done the same thing as

⁸⁶ This book is available in some public libraries. Crown Publishers, New York, 1995, ISBN: 0-517-70315-7 D.M.Rohl cuts thru the Egyptologists fogscreen created to cast doubts upon the Bible by mis-aligning Egyptian chronology from datable Biblical chronology.

religionists, yet they’re incredulous when someone suggests that their vast dating structure is in error. What most unsuspecting students are unaware of is that evolutionists date their fossil finds by means of the strata in which it is found. And then age the strata in which the fossil is found by the fossil found within it! Roundy, roundy, round!! Discovered evidence is **made** to fit the hardened theory. If it can’t fit, then it’s rejected. They’ve determined absolutely that the Earth is 3 billion years old, when they really don’t have any verifiable evidence of their *supposed* fact. But, it must be, because they need it to be! This is how the human mind works, especially when it is set upon rejecting God and revealed truth, even obvious truth. (e.g. Romans 1:28) But then, everything is subsequently accepted or rejected based solely on its being in conformity to that man-imposed, intellectual, God-disregarding definition.

We need to see Satan’s hand in this! The narrow Judaic definition of monotheism excludes a truth. The Christian definition of monotheism (Trinitarianism) though modified from the earlier premise, also excludes truths. The early Church was not Trinitarian. Institutional theology has wedged itself into a seemingly inextricable double-bind where both positions are opposed to some Truth! We also have people with different conceptions who **define** the word differently. A Jewish-defined monotheism is quite different than a Catholic-defined monotheism! Now what?

What do we do when a point of evident Biblical Truth doesn’t conform exactly to the ‘monotheistic definition’ as the majority define it? (Then again, the majority are the Catholics and Protestants, and we know they define monotheism as a Trinity of Beings!) But, what do we do? What is ‘sacred’? Do we hold to the original conception and reject any and all non-corroborating evidence, or do we honestly allow the evidence to factor into and even modify the original theory? It’s a matter of intellectual honesty. Something not always present in science and too often not in theology!

A Startling Announcement

Monotheism seemed to serve Israel well for all the years prior to the first century. After all, they only

dealt with what seemed to them as just one single Being. Though there were scriptural ‘suggestions’ here and there that could have indicated otherwise, most of those had been debated, explained away, minimized, or even ‘emended out’ of their scriptures by the second century BC.⁸⁷ The issue was largely calmed and dormant until the fall of 5 BC, when a certain infant was brought to the Temple in Jerusalem for presentation to the Lord. This was forty days after His birth. (Lev. 12:4) (The enquiring ‘Wise Men’ hadn’t yet arrived in the area so it was still safe to do this.)

At that occasion, an elderly man and a 110 year old woman were inspired to appear in the Temple, the former making pronouncements very unsettling to the priests then in power, by referring to certain prophesied political eventualities, and she to redemptive matters.⁸⁸ (Luke 2:25-38) It was here announced in official circles that this individual would restructure the world religio-political scene and was Israel’s Redeemer. This was noted, as evidenced by the fact that it was written about in Luke’s account more than half a century later! Simeon’s prophecy included an obvious reference to Psalm 110:5-7, which is just after the place that says: “*you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*”!

It was at this point that a new set of dynamics began to impact the belief system then in place, the reverberations of which we still feel today.

Later, official representatives from Parthia with their escorts alarmed the area when they entered Judea and enquired of Herod as to the location of the ‘King’ whose star they had seen from their homeland some time before. The priests were consulted and decided to reveal to Herod what they knew. When these Megistanes returned back to their own land another way, disregarding Herod’s request for a report, Herod then sent armed forces to Bethlehem to kill all infants there under two years of age. Herod died in the winter of 4 BC⁸⁹ at his

⁸⁷ See the article “*The 134 Emendations of the Sopherim*”

⁸⁸ Did Simeon represent the OT and Anna the New?

⁸⁹ Josephus records the time of Herod’s death, referencing it to an eclipse that occurred shortly before. This eclipse has been positively dated to the fall of 5 BC, shortly after the “Fast” (Tishri 10) of that year. See Antiquities of the Jews, Book XVII, Chapter 6, Paragraph 4 & footnote.

winter palace in Jericho, so we know this had to be prior to that. Having been warned of the situation after the Magi’s departure, the young family then sought refuge in Egypt until Herod had died.

What Were they Thinking?

We have to wonder if the priests’ awareness of the prophecy by Simeon in any way affected their decision to betray the location of this ‘child’ to the wickedly jealous Herod. Did they expect Simeon referring to His being ‘pierced through’⁹⁰ would be facilitated by this? No doubt this justification was offered later, after Herod had issued the order to kill all Bethlehem’s young children. After all, this child could be approaching the right age to be offered as a Paschal Sacrifice and the season was drawing near! (Ex. 12:5) What we do know is that they ‘gave it up’ when they could have kept the matter secret. Their first loyalty was to Herod! A second consideration was that Herod, about that time, had killed one High Priest and replaced him with another! (This is recorded in the same place referenced in Josephus below, left column.) The message to the priesthood: Don’t mess with Herod!

Things remained relatively quiet for the next eleven years, until the Passover season of AD 9 when a twelve year old in the Temple engaged the scholars of the day, the ‘doctors of the law’, listening to what they had to say and astounding them with His responses. It isn’t stated what matters were discussed, except for one clue: that given at the very end. He made it clear that these exchanges had been His Father’s business! (He didn’t say “Our Father’s business!) At the time, the scholars didn’t fathom the implications,⁹¹ but it was the opening to many similar assertions that were to come! This lad’s true Father was a Being in the background, that He was destined to **reveal** as had never been before: A Being who was NOT their Father,⁹² but was His Father, who they’d never heard or seen at any time. The True Father was a relatively unknown entity in their day to them.

⁹⁰ Luke 2:35 “(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,)” as would these other heads of state.

(Ps.110:5&6)

⁹¹ Luke 2:49-50 “...and they understood not the saying...”

⁹² John 5:37, 8:16-19, 29, 42,

The GOD of the Old Testament

If that wasn't enough, Jesus later introduced another assertion: that He was alive and present in the days of the Patriarchs: Abraham's for example. (John 8:58) They thought that "the Father" was their God. But Jesus assured them that **He wasn't!** Not only on account of their belief system as it was revealed through their actions, but also in practical fact! The Being they'd known in history and in their scriptures was NOT that Being! The True Father was to become known only to those to whom He would be revealed!⁹³

This formidable premise leads us to the obvious question. Then, who WAS that Being known thru the pages of the Old Testament? It is the answer to this question, found in the pages of the Bible, Old Testament and New, that were provocative then and remain so today among some worshippers of God.

They Testify of ME!

The common perception still in existence today was very much alive in the first century also. The Jews thought they knew who God was. But it was the revelation of another Being, one concealed from their awareness from the beginning, and one who they had already rejected, whose reality made necessary a revision to their conceptual belief system. Not something they were disposed to do. Tradition after all!

Of all the issues that came to the fore in the New Testament Era, one in particular stood out, and that one centered around the identity of the person of Jesus Christ. In fact, it was **the** issue that led to His being rejected and ultimately condemned to death. Some might say that it was the abrogation of the Law that was most controversial (the very thing Jesus said NOT to even think!)⁹⁴ but it was not. It was His making Himself **equal** with God that first emerged as a life threatening confrontation among the religious leadership. (John 5:18, Phil. 2:6) You see, the religious establishment thought their Scriptures referred to a Being they regarded as their Father. Jesus said plainly that the scriptures, even those

written by Moses, were speaking of *HIM!* "*Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And you will not come to me that you might have life.*" (John 5:39-40) Now, this is a profound passage, yet so many read right on by what it plainly says. Not only is it alleging that the Old Testament wrote of the person of the Son, but that He was the God Being that is found all through it. Notice, they *thought* they could obtain eternal life from the Being they read of in the Old Testament. Yet, Jesus said He was the One thru whom that Life comes. Thus doubly affirming the statement as to His identity. HE was that God identified in the Old Testament!!

Earlier, He had spoken to them regarding the Sabbath. He said to them that He was the Lord of the Sabbath Day. (**Matt. 12:8**, Mk. 2:28, Lk. 6:5) "*For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath Day.*" Most today regard this as reason to disregard Sabbathkeeping. In fact, it is a revelation far more profound than that. In His statement He reveals a fact consistent with other statements, that the Lord those religious Jews thought they worshipped in keeping the Sabbath, that Lord was the Son of man. HE was that Lord! In other places we find that He was the one who created the Sabbath AND the 'spiritual rest' it pictures. In Hebrews 4, the author recognizes who it is who's offering mankind entrance into His Rest. It was (the one who later became) **Jesus!** "*For He spoke in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works....Seeing therefore it remains that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief... For if **Jesus** had given them rest, then He wouldn't have afterward spoken of another day." (Heb. 4:4,6,8) God created the Sabbath by resting. (Gen. 2:2-3) But here we find that it was Jesus who offered, then withdrew His Rest to His chosen people of old. He was that Lord!*

In the verses from Hebrews 4 quoted above there is a quote from David in Psalm 95:6-11. David identifies the One speaking as the LORD (*YHWH*). He is the one who made us, he says in verse 6. It's the LORD our God who disallowed them entrance into His Rest! Jesus therefore must be YHWH!

⁹³ John 6:46, Matt. 11:27, Luke 10:22, John 1:18

⁹⁴ Matthew 5:17

Jesus was the Creator. *“Without Him was not anything made that was made”*. (John 1:3) He created the Sabbath Day making it Holy as well. *“He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.”* (v. 10)

David later wrote that the Lord at THE LORD’s right hand is LORD also! (Psalm 110: compare v.1 with v. 5) (Note here: The Sopherim of the second century BC changed their texts to ‘emend out’ the clear reference to the one who the LORD is talking to, instructing Him to be seated at His own right hand. Verse 5 originally had YHWH (LORD) where we today see Adonai (Lord). It was this reference, when uttered in their presence, with its obvious point, that caused such murderous reaction.) Jesus was to sit at the LORD’s right hand and be known as LORD Himself when so seated. (We have to understand that He was restored to being YHWH, knowing that He was the Creator who left His Spirit existence to take on a physical existence for the suffering of death. *“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. Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name.* (Phil. 2:6-9))

This Being left His pre-existing state of being! He took on a form He didn’t have previously. He was later exalted to His former Spiritual existence, regaining a pre-eminence appropriate to His accomplishment. (v. 11) *“And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.”* Apparently the Father isn’t threatened by His Son’s competition!

This situation being the answer to Jesus’ prayer on that Passover evening: *“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with you before the world was.”* (John 17:5)

Eternal is His Name

The primary name by which Israel knew their God was the name YHWH, (Yahweh). The name means the self-existing one, *“the Eternal”*. Not all that dissimilar to the name used only by Daniel in his Chapter 7: The Ancient of Days.

Like what we see in Psalm 110, Daniel shows the *Son of man* as also being ***the Ancient of Days***. In verse 13 we see the Son of man ascending up thru the clouds of heaven to be presented before the Ancient of Days. But in verses 9 and 22 it is inescapable that the one we know as the Son of man is also the Ancient of Days. This ‘other’ Ancient of Days is to rule the nations on earth with His Saints. Verses 9-10 and 21-22 correlate to each other, but for a time the other Being existed as the Son of man! (v.13-14)⁹⁵

It was this subtlety that Jesus knew would provoke a strong reaction at His trial. That’s why He posed a blend of Psalm 110:1 with Daniel 7:13 as His response to the High Priests pointed demand. (Mt.26:64, Mk.14:62) He was dead before that day was ended! The point was very clear to them! Obviously by the result, we can see their persuasion regarding the possibility of a second Being being a God also. It violated their ‘monotheistic’ definition, and they would not consider changing it. So their rigid monotheistic definition proved to be the discipline that caused them to reject their true Messiah and Savior!

Unto Us a Child is Born

We have to wonder how such a position came to be so rigidly implanted, especially considering such clear and specific prophecies as Isaiah 9:6-7. *“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, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.* (Lk. 1.32, 33) *The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”* It seems this one has it all! Who is that son? Is He a son of man, or of God? This Son is called GOD! How can someone of human origin be God? He must be a Son of God in order to be referred to as the Mighty God. This same

⁹⁵ The date of this event is likely ‘Wave Sheaf Day’, Sunday morning after His resurrection, Abib 17. He had to be alive in the Spirit, mission completed, in order to be presented before God’s Throne for official acceptance.

Being is called everlasting Father! A descendant of King David who will sit upon David's throne in His Kingdom! This 'Son' in another context is also known as a 'Father'. (He with His Bride will also be parents to those 'children' called in and after the millennial age.) It's all here! Do we understand what we're reading?

On what basis did the Jewish theologians reject all these potent declarations? It had to be the same: their monotheistic definition. Functioning to obstruct God's revealed Truth! What will it take to fix this?

The ROCK in the Wilderness

Few places in the New Testament are as blatantly explicit as is 1st Corinthians 10 in making clear the identity of Jesus Christ as being the God of the Old Testament. Not only was Jesus represented in that manna that sustained them for 40 years,⁹⁶ but He was also Israel's ROCK. "*The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.*" (Ps.18:2) "...I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect..." (De.18:3-4) "*There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none besides thee: neither is there any rock like our God.*" (1st Sam.2:2) "*The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; the God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.*" (2nd Sam.22:2-3) "*The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.*" (2nd Sam.22:47) "*The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*" (2nd Sam.23:3)

From these we can see that Israel's Rock was the LORD (YHWH). But Paul affirmed that Rock was Christ! "*Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and*

⁹⁶ John 6:31-41 "*Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. ...The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.*"

in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." (1st Cor.10:1-4) The Rock was Christ, the Rock was Yahweh, (YHWH) therefore, Christ must be Yahweh! Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament!

But at some point in time, the Rock of Israel's salvation acquired an offensiveness. "*And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel,.*" (Isa.8:14)⁹⁷ "*As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and a rock of offence: and whosoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed.*" (Rom.9:33 (see also 1st Pet.2:8)) The instrument of that happening was Israel's strict monotheistic conception. To them, God was just one single Being. By that, they were compelled to reject the Anointed of God. He was their LORD, (YHWH) the prototype, THE ONE who would come as an infant, born into the human kind. But that was outside their accepted conceptual parameters, despite the explicit prophecies given above.

So, Who is Elohim?

If that wasn't enough, we have another common name applied to God (one that is also commonly applied to other gods)⁹⁸ the name Elohim. A plural form. Even as early as Genesis 1, we see more than one Being determining between themselves, "*Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness:*" ...the translators recognizing the fact of plurality in their choice of wording. Being that the name Elohim is **not** applied exclusively to the true God, we must recognize that it isn't God's

⁹⁷ My article "*And So, All Israel Shall be Saved*" addresses the blindness that affects both houses to the present day and what **hope** those who have died, concluded under blindness, have in the resurrections.

⁹⁸ The overwhelming majority of times the word **God** occurs in the Old Testament it is from Strong's #430, and is rendered in the singular. However, some 216 times the same word is rendered gods (plural, small g) it is also #430. The first such instance is Genesis 3:5 "*For God doth know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*" What accounts for it being rendered in the singular in one application but plural when alluding to any other than our God? Both the first and last words of the first line of Psalm 82:6 are **elohim**!

proper name. Secondly, we must allow that the name Elohim can apply to a congregate of Beings. It appears that way so many times in the Hebrew Scriptures. The more formidable question is to ask why Elohim is rendered as though it were singular most of the time? Again, the ‘accepted’ definition of monotheism accounts for it.

We have similar words in our language. For example, the word **breed**. It’s singular, but we recognize the implicit sense of it involving more than one individual member, yet restricting those members to a distinct kind, excluding others not of that breed. You don’t have a breed without there being at least one breeding pair and offspring. Elohim is a similar term. Only our stubborn dedication to a humanly defined Monotheistic Discipline would prevent us from conceiving of its range of meaning properly. In the Elohim there’s presently more than one Being. Eventually, there’ll be uncounted numbers.

Jesus IS God

A near-lethal confrontation between Jesus and the Jews in the Temple during the winter of His final year, (John 10:34-36), addressed this issue in part: *“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. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, Ye are gods’? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?”* Jesus was here quoting Psalm 82:6, which says, *“I have said, You are **gods**; and all of you are **children of the most High**.”* (‘gods’ here is *elohim!* #430.) What He meant is further clarified in the statement, ‘all are children of the Most High’

Paul’s discourse in Romans 8:19-23 & 29 has, *“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the **glory** which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. ... because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the **children of God**. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together*

*until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. ...For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be **conformed to the image** of his Son, that he might be the **first-born among many brethren**.”*

*“But as many as received him, to them gave he **power to become the sons of God**, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”* (John 1:12) These becoming God’s kind. This power is not something we have inherent, it is something that must be given! It says of those who have become converted (have received Him), there is something beyond that, which we have the inherent power to become, but have not yet attained, just by becoming converted. *“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: ... Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does **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.”* (1st John 3:1-2) There’s a future manifestation of the glorified form: *“...the whole creation groans ...waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.”* (Romans 8:22 & 19) Conversion alone is not that manifestation!

Elohim is also a reproducing kind! A gathering Family! *“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the **whole family** in heaven and earth is named,..”* (Eph. 3:14) *“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.... For he hath put all things under his feet. (Ps.110:1) But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, **that God may be all in all**.”* (1st Cor. 15:24, 27-28)

A Full Inclusion

The term, ‘*the whole family*’, indicates more than just those two, the Father and the Son! There is a

point in time, beyond the millennial age and its contribution to the ranks of Salvation, when all beings living will be brought into that same ‘**one-ness**’ Jesus requested for His Saints that Passover evening we read of in John 17. *“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: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to **as many as** thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the **only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.**...And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was...Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be **one**; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be **one in us**:... And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be **one, even as we are one**: 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.”* (v. 1-3, 5, 20-23)

The ‘strict monotheist’ should take the time to consider these statements of Jesus very carefully. These things could not be stated, they could not be conceptualized, unless there were two Beings interacting and inter-relating with one another.

The ‘Trinitarian’ monotheist should consider them as well. The Father and the Son can not be the same Being! One left the glorified state to become flesh, the other did not. A physical Being can not be a ‘hypostasis’ of a Spirit Being! The God of the Old Testament can’t be a different Being than the God of the New, having different personalities and different regard for the Law! These proposals just do not compute!

What we need to face is the question of what do we regard as the most important, Biblical revelation or religious convention? On what foundation is your faith based?

So, we have the matter of Jesus being the God of the Old Testament, the one who was the Creator and the one who brought Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness. We have the matter of the plurality of the Elohim, with one Being speaking

to another. We see both having the same personal names; (*Yahweh, the Ancient of Days, the Father*) with one having sent the other, and the other being restored to the Glorified state from which He had divested Himself. We have the inclusion of called individuals being added into the God-family, being called the sons of God, being given the **power** to actually become so, and in the distant future we anticipate a reconciliation of all Beings in heaven and earth into a unified existence. (1st Cor. 15:28) *“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature...”* (2nd Peter 1:4)


It is abundantly clear that the fundamental parameters of monotheism, as they exist in both the various Jewish and Christian denominations, do not adequately accommodate all these things.

Jesus is LORD, the God of the Old Testament.

The Father as we know Him today was not known specifically to Israel prior to Yahweh having come and revealing Him.

Elohim is a plural word and is translated plural everywhere except when referring to our God.

The ONE Being in the Bible was that one who became Jesus Christ, so if there is only One God, as some allege, it is Christ. We’d thus be forced to reject the Father, if we must limit the number of Beings to just one, because the God of the Old Testament, the One who Created, who gave the Law, who spoke to and even appeared to various individuals, was the one who became Jesus Christ! Of the Father, Jesus said, *“You have neither heard His voice at any time, or seen His shape.”* (John 5:37) John wrote, in 1st John 1:1-2, *“That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen** with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal **life**, which was **with the Father**...”)*

Which of these, if any, are allowed under monotheism’s ‘strict’ definition, or under its ‘Trinitarian’ definition? Are we willing to open our conceptualizations sufficiently to accommodate these Biblical Truths, or is that to be set aside for a later day? (Rom.11:25 & 32) 

You DO Believe in the Trinity, Don't You?

This Prime Question posed by potential Counterparts in the Religious World can make or break a Dialog. How we respond to it can have Far Reaching and even Abrupt Consequences. Do WE know what Answers to Give?

A friend who has strong religious interests posed the above question to me rather abruptly one day. Not sure of my religious persuasion, he wanted to know where we stood on this all important matter. It seems, this particular question, or manner of conceiving the Divinity issues, is of utmost importance in those religious communities that regard themselves as being 'christian'. It is, in effect, often used as a shortcut in identifying fellow Christian believers. For them, it can make a long story short!

Despite the fact that the Trinitarian view didn't arrive in any where near its basic form until the mid-to-late fourth century, and despite the fact that the doctrine, as it's regarded, and as it was adopted in the fourth century is **not** the identical belief as is widely held today, it seems to make very little difference in the general arena of religious belief. One need not be exact, one need not be critical or analytical. With most, a casual acquaintance with the concept is sufficient. Its actual form is seen as being less relevant!

But, we have in this situation, (that the Trinitarian doctrine differs from its originally stated form and has more than one modern variation), a useful tool with any questioner to ask the specifics of that person's own Trinitarian belief. In fact, it may be revealing to the person asking us the question that his 'essential belief' isn't as clearly defined in his own mind as perhaps it ought to be.

Many Forms / Many Paradoxes

In general, the intent of the Trinitarian Doctrine, as it was developing in advance of the Council of Nicea in 325 AD and more fully adopted at the

next Council at Constantinople a generation later, was intended to resolve essential questions regarding the personhood of God while accommodating the monotheistic discipline inherited from its Jewish roots. The early Church recognized the two-person Divinity, a doctrine often referred to as "the Father and the Son"⁵⁹ by John and by Paul in his many epistles. Yet, the indelible monotheistic prerequisite, longstanding in Judaic Religion had also to remain inviolate with later theologians and provided a basis to justify eventually laying aside the early Church's original understanding.

There were basically two versions of the "Nature of God" under serious consideration at Nicea, the Arian view and the Athanasian view. Both had their problems, but each to some degree sought to address the vexing questions.

Simply stated, the modern Trinitarian Doctrine draws into play and is structured around either of two fundamental concepts: That there are three distinct and separate Beings which comprise the Godhead, or more commonly, that there is but One Being who can and does manifest Himself in any of three hupostases.⁶⁰ Not everyone is

⁵⁹ See the chapter "A Whole New Paradigm: The Doctrine of the Father and the Son" which considers how the early Church apostles and disciples conceived of the inter-relationship between Christ and His Father.

⁶⁰ Two free articles address this enigmatic word: "The Hupostasis Hoax" and "What is a Hupostasis?" The unique Greek word provided a convenient term by which to allude to a single Being concept, while allowing it to account for the obvious manifestation of multiple Beings. However, when properly translated, the word itself indicates one Being set in juxtaposition to another, one standing in support of the other!

clear in his own mind regarding the distinctions or which of these his own denomination ascribes to, and in some cases, which of them the individual believer ascribes to. Often as not, there can be variations of belief even within an organization. It isn't all that settled a matter.

But the three distinct-and-separate Beings idea poses problems, in that some see it as believing in three Gods. The hupostasis idea poses its own set of problems, though better accommodating the monotheistic discipline. It creates a challenge to the belief that Christ was God in the flesh, because you see, a Being in the flesh can not be a hupostasis of another Being or Beings which are not and never were manifest in the flesh. (We would never allege that the Holy Spirit came in the flesh. For that matter, would we ever allege that the Father was one and the same Being as the Son? Consider what consternation that suggestion would have among Catholics or Fundamentalists with respect to who was the author of the Old Covenant Law!) Thus, the dilemma, which causes some to pose the idea that Jesus was not God! If that position isn't taken, then the hupostasis form is at odds with itself and creates a question with no functional or coherent resolvability. How can a Spirit be a hupostasis of a Being in and of the flesh? How can a Being represented only as a hupostasis ever actually die? But, Christ, the Son, died! These and other 'knotty little problems' are a reach way to far for comfort with most 'untrained' believers.

So while the matter of the questioner's personal belief preference is useful in our posing questions back to him, we need to be specific and clear as to our position on the matter, keeping in mind that the Trinity is admittedly an 'unexplainable mystery' in its best rendition. It doesn't take much to bring out that situation, as the above considerations show. There are others.

Better Answers

But, the understanding that the early Church had with respect to the distinct personalities of the Father and the Son was clearer and infinitely more understandable than the construct posed in the fourth century. It's just that their early position didn't accommodate itself to the prevalent Judaic monotheistic concept of the day and

had to be modified in order to be able to do so.

Our response to the questions should first make it clear that we have **better answers** than do typical believers. As it relates to the identities of the Son, who came to reveal to mankind His Father, a Being who remained largely unseen and unheard in generations past,⁶¹ the early Church understood that one Being related to and supported the mission of the other. Hebrews 1:1-3 presents this picture in greater clarity than does any other passage. It presents a contrast of one Being identical to the other in two respects, but distinctly different in two other respects, then has one sitting at the right hand of the other! (The Jews went nuts when someone quoted this passage from Psalm 110 to them. (Acts 7:55)) Such a situation disallows the One Being / three hupostases idea, as it requires there be two concurrent manifestations! In the same passage in Hebrews 1, nothing is stated of the Holy Spirit, and not alluding to it a separate person. (Interestingly, it's this very passage from which theologians extracted their word for the phenomenon: *hupostasis*! (Translated "person"!))

But particularly, as it involves the Holy Spirit, we have better answers, in that we're not looking at a Being distinct and separate of the others, the Father and the Son, but a **living dimension** in which both exist and into which **we** can be born! God's Spirit comprises that living dimension. Jesus posed that idea to Nicodemus (in John 3), and though popular religion quickly picked-up on and runs with the idea of being 'Born Again', the idea of being born into the spirit dimension, actually being composed of and ever sustained in a living form thereby never fully registered.

Our objective with orthodox believers must be to keep the dialog open without being too dogmatic or offensive to where we're dismissed as unbelievers, when in fact, we have more logical and biblically consistent beliefs and better answers than do they. The key is to present what we have in such a way as to foster serious thought on their part regarding their own teaching. At least, if we can get them to think!

⁶¹ John 5:37 "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."

We DO in a Way!

Answering their question, “You do believe in the Trinity, don’t you?”, I would be inclined to say, “We do in a way.” We do believe in the Father, we do believe in the Son (though as a distinct and separate Being of the Father) and we do believe in the Holy Spirit, but not in such restricted form as the Trinitarian belief system imposes, as we allow God’s Spirit to exist and to function with a much greater operational capacity than do they!

God’s Spirit provides the power and dimension by which the Father and the Son exist (each projecting their distinct Natures and personalities into their respective component (as will we Saints when we are raised into the Spirit dimension at the Last Trump.)). It is the **power** by which the Father sustains the Universe. It is the means by which God can project His thoughts and Nature into our minds, and that seed being the means by which we may ultimately be born into His Kind! Clearly a much greater role than orthodox Trinitarian thought allows. We can be born into His Kind, being made full ‘spirit born sons of God’. “*But as many as received him, to them gave he **power to become** the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*”⁶² (John 1:12) Nicodemus didn’t fully get it. Do we?

Not just He alone, but Peter also posed something very revealing in 2nd Peter 1:1-4: “*Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ: 2: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 3: According as **his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4: 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.*****”

It might also be an advantage to take the high ground when answering, by asking, Do you ascribe to the Athanasian view or the Arian

⁶² Notice: Where John 1:12 mentions having received Him as being in the past, it leaves our having the power to become as a yet future event!

view? That should put the questioner on more of a defensive stance, as few know that there’s such a difference in the conceptualization of Trinitarian belief. But then, you’d put yourself in a position of explaining to them the differences. ☺

Another useful question is to ask which Being the questioner understands to have been the Creator. Did it not involve the Spirit? (Gen. 1:2)

Some Passing Considerations:

The New Testament speaks of the Father and the Son as having two separate consciousnesses and realms of jurisdiction. Consider these for example:

a. The Father reserves timing of end time events to Himself only, keeping the awareness from the angels and even His Son. (Matt. 24:36)

b. The Son is assigned all judgment activities. The Father remains separate from the process. (John 5:22)

c. The Son is placed over all things, but only **until** the final conquest of all His enemies, then turns the Kingdom of God over to the Father. This event would be more than curious, and logically un-explainable if the two were in fact one and the same Being. (Note also: the final ‘enemy’ is death, something of which the Father is incapable of ever experiencing.) (1st Corinthians 15:24-28)

If these two were one and the same ‘Person’, how could these consciousness areas and jurisdictional areas be kept distinct from one another? Does God have two mentalities?

The Son claims that He will come to us in the agency of the Spirit. So, is it His presence when the Spirit comforts us?

Do we have any scriptural indication that the Spirit has a consciousness distinct from and independent of the Father and the Son? Is the mind of the Spirit imparted to the Father and the Son BY the Spirit, thus giving them consciousness, or do they impart their Natures and consciousness TO that component of Spirit Essence by which they exist?

When the Holy Spirit inspires us, does it convey

the mind OF the Father or the Son, or does it convey its own mind?

And, of what essence do angels exist? Is there another source of Spirit? They also possess a consciousness which can be made aware of God's thoughts or denied awareness, as Matthew 24:36 reveals.

Each of these considerations have potent relevance when coming to a full understanding of the Nature of God issue.

(Continued on page 51)

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INTERLUDE: A SHORT HISTORY

(Gleaned from the Internet)

"The disciples of Christ, scattered by persecution, spread the gospel of the kingdom. In Egypt, these missionaries found a ready acceptance of the new religion and as usually happens, the growing numbers of believers began to gravitate toward certain charismatic leaders. The two most famous of these men were Arius and Athanasius, both of Alexandria.

Arius (c.250-336) held that Christ is the Son of God, and that because He is the Son He therefore had a beginning. "It is a necessary condition of the filial relation," He wrote, "that the Father must be older than his Son. The Father and the Son are of "like substance" (or nature) and therefore Christ is divine and worthy of worship. (A century before Arius, another believer named Novation of Rome held a similar view.)

Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, headed the opposing party which held that the Father and the Son are of "one substance," coequal, and co-eternal. They asserted that the doctrine of Arius lowered the Son making Him less worthy of worship than the Father. (It is worth noting here that the Egyptians had worshiped a triune God. Osiris the father, Horus the son, & Isis the virgin, otherwise known as Amum-Maut-Khonso).

(This Trinity Doctrine writing certainly isn't supporting Athanasius and is not supporting Arius either, due to the lack of knowledge about everything Arius taught. Rather I am just sounding out the history behind the development of the Trinity doctrine. Perhaps Arius was correct maybe not. Most people I have met who have knowledge of these two men seem to say one was right and the other was wrong. Very few people are open to the fact that perhaps both were wrong.

Politicians often use language that refers to two choices and most of the time both choices are in their favor. Sometimes we need to think outside the square in order to see the truth. At some stage I would like to study more about Arius's teachings, but until then, I cannot promote his teachings as I am not sure what he taught.)

Moving on, history records that there were heated debates between these two factions. The citizens of Alexandria amused themselves with theatrical satires and plays depicting the protagonists, and not many years went by before it could be said that nearly every Christian man and woman had an opinion concerning the nature of Christ. The Jews and Pagans exacerbated things by their mocking derision.

The emperor Constantine was at first very amused by all the squabbling. It kept the people occupied. But as the controversy dragged on, he finally called a council of nearly 300 bishops to settle the matter, although only a fraction turned up. The first ecumenical council of the Christian church took place in Nicaea, now in modern Turkey (c.325), 294 years after the death of Christ. The presence of the emperor added to the vehemence of the arguments. He would listen to all sides and then rule. His verdict would decide truth.

As to the main point, the Son was declared to be of the "same substance" with the Father. Arius was branded a heretic and banished to one of the remote provinces of Illyricum. The conclusion was ambiguous and settled nothing. The ruling of the Emperor was clear. He quickly issued letters denouncing Arius, and ordered that anyone found with a copy of his writings must burn it or be put to death.

Concerning the nature of Christ, the first Nicene Creed reads: "The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes those who say that there was a time when the Son of God was not; and that before he was begotten he was not, and that he was made out of nothing, or out of another substance or essence, and is created, or changeable, or alterable."

At the Council of Nicaea, the debate was over the nature of Christ (begotten vs un-begotten). The nature of the Spirit was not an issue. It would be another fifty-six years before the institutional church would decree worship of the Holy Spirit.

History records Emperor Constantine as a criminal. He had murdered his son Crispus, his nephew Licinius, and suffocated in a steam-bath his wife of twenty years Fausta, mother of three of his sons. The public abhorrence of his deeds could not be concealed. A plaque comparing his reign to that of Nero was affixed to the palace gate. Constantine

threatened to massacre the Roman populace who had insulted him.

This is the same Constantine who feigned a "conversion" to Christ, but not wanting to antagonize the pagan element, waited until he lay on his death bed to be "baptized" (just in case there is indeed a judgment). He is the same who decreed that Christians and pagans should "rest" on the same day - *Sunday*.

Constantine's Son who took over the reign as Emperor, followed Arius' teaching. Constantine's favorite sister was also a supporter of the disreputed teacher. She prevailed upon her brother and barely three years after the date of the council, Arius was restored to favor. He was treated by the whole court with the respect which would have been due to an innocent and oppressed man. His faith was approved by the synod of Jerusalem; and the emperor seemed impatient to repair his injustice. He issued a royal command that Arius should receive the holy communion in the cathedral of Constantinople. But on the same day which had been fixed for His triumph, Arius died very suddenly and under strange circumstances. The opponents of Arius said that God had answered their prayers and saved the church from the worst of her enemies. The three principle leaders of the Catholics, Athanasius of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, and Paul of Constantinople were deposed, accused by numerous councils; and were afterwards banished to distant provinces. The believers were left to choose what they would believe with regard to the death of Arius - be it miracle or poisoning.

THE NICENE CREED AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Regarding the Holy Spirit, the original Nicene Creed stated simply: "We believe in the Holy Spirit."

This was later modified by the Council of Constantinople (c.381) to read: "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets."

THE APOSTLES' CREED

The Apostles' creed is not the work of the Apostles themselves. It had its origin in the form of a confession of faith recited by the candidate before baptism. It is based on a formula current in Rome (c.200) although its present form did not appear before the 6th century. It is used by Roman Catholics and many Protestant churches but has never been accepted by the Orthodox churches.

"I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."(The Apostles' Creed.)

THE ATHANASIAN CREED

The first clear reference to this writing was made during the **6th century**, therefore Athanasius himself is unlikely the author. It is Latin in origin, and in the Middle Ages it was regularly used in church services. Since the Reformation its use in worship service has been confined to the Roman Catholic church and the Anglican Communion, although it is now infrequently recited.

"We worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the substance. We distinguish among the persons, but we do not divide the substance. For the Father is a distinct person; the Son is a distinct person; and the Holy Spirit is a distinct person. ... The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit is eternal. Nevertheless, there are not three eternal beings, but one eternal being. Thus there are not three uncreated beings, not three boundless beings, but one uncreated being and one boundless being. ... Thus the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. But there are not three gods, but one God." (From the Athanasian Creed.)

SUMMARY

Throughout the ancient world as far back as Babylon, it was common for pagans to worship triad gods. This was prevalent in Egypt (Horus, Osiris & Isis), India (Siva, Brahma & Vishnu), and Babylon (Ishtar, Sin & Shamash). We may think that Paganism was conquered by Christianity, but it is probably more accurate to say that Christianity assimilated it. Even the fact that Christians worship on Sunday, was the adoption of a Pagan festival, because the Jews worship on the Sabbath. (As did the early Church.)

The Jews also believe that there is only one God as opposed to a triune God. However many Jews do not believe that Jesus is the Christ / Messiah. According to scripture, this blindness and rebellion has caused God to work through the Gentiles. But to the Jews who trust in the Old Testament and want proof that

God has a Son, please read Proverbs 30:4 (English-NIV)"

"Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in his cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and the name of his son? Tell me if you know!"

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Commenting on the Above:

We find in these formal statements from the fourth century and later, a basic truth. While the accommodation of a 'third person' (as a separate and distinct Being, conscious and essentially equal in every respect with the Father and the Son) is found to be the confounding factor, yet a fundamental truth is readily acknowledged. It is seen in the positions of these:

Dr. Arius: "The Father and the Son are of "like substance" (or nature) and therefore Christ is divine and worthy of worship." (*However, Dr. Arius took exception to Christ having an eternal pre-existence.*)

Bishop Athanasius: "the Father and the Son are of "one substance," coequal, and co-eternal.


These readily admit to the fact of both Beings being "**of one like substance**". Noteworthy is the lack of reference to the Holy Spirit. Where they err is in failing to recognize that the "one substance" IS the Holy Spirit. IT is the 'Essence' in and by which both the Father and the Son draw their means of existence and project their Consciousness and Power, just as the physical dimension is the means by which we draw our existence and function in life. Once that point is made clear, we have an avenue to more correctly explain the relationships between these admittedly separate Beings.

The Trinitarian Doctrine was **developed over time** and **represents a different position** than was espoused by the earliest Councils. The "Athanasian Creed" above is one example: ⁶³

⁶³ It should be noted that this creed was developed **after** the death of Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria. In the first Council of Nicea in 325 AD, the 'third person' idea had not been the issue, but was later developed toward the end of Athanasius' life, some 40+ years later!

It is in the development of this formal statement we find, spelled-out, from a couple of centuries later, that the paradoxical enigma comes into sharper focus. It sets up a scenario by which the believer is inclined to visualize 'three separate Beings', but the Creed remains in pointed denial of that actual situation. (A self-admission of being at odds with logic and clear Biblical evidence, we might add.) It is by correcting one fundamental concept, what the Holy Spirit is and does, that their theologically created enigma can be clarified.

It remains unfortunate that the Trinitarian Doctrine, as presented in the modern era, is the mental prism through which worshippers are compelled to conceptualize the God. The early New Testament Church functioned without this theology and conceptualized the Father and the Son as two distinct but directly inter-supportive Beings. Jesus Himself employed the premise, by blending Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13, ⁶⁴ verses which **clearly show two distinct and separate Divine Beings**, to provoke a reaction among the Jewish religious leaders of the day, in order to assure Himself a timely death sentence!

We would be seriously remiss if we didn't carefully and thoughtfully investigate and embrace **that** "Faith once delivered". 

⁶⁴ Psalm 110:1 "*The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*"

Daniel 7:13 "*I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.*"

Matthew 26:64 "*Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*" (Blending the two verses above.)

1st Corinthians 15:24-28 "*Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*" (There has to be Two Beings for this power turnover to ever be!)

Zechariah 12:1 "...Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the **spirit of man** within him:..." (NKJ)

Luke 11:13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father **give the Holy Spirit** to those who ask Him!" (NKJ)

Acts 5:32 "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the **Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.**"

From **Romans 8**: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but **after the Spirit**. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. **For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.** So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the **Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.** And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the **Spirit of him** that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by **his Spirit that dwelleth in you.** Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.** For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. **The Spirit itself beareth**

witness with **our spirit**, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; **heirs of God**, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the **earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.** For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because **the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.** For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which **have the firstfruits of the Spirit**, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the **redemption of our body.** For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the **Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:** for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but **the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us** with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is **the mind of the Spirit**, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. **For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.** Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also **called:** and whom he called, them he also **justified:** and whom he justified, them he also **glorified.**" (KJV)

1st Corinthians 3:16-17 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

John 1:12 "But as many as received him, to them gave he **power to become the sons of God**, even to them that believe on his name:" 