



A Plain Statement about the One God, the God of Jesus and of the Bible

by Anthony Buzzard

God is one. There is only one Person who is God. Before the universe came into being, the living, personal, self-existent God was alone (Isa. 44:24). This one infinite and perfect Being is unique. He has no identical. He is in a class of his own. In his nature, personality and attributes God is undivided and indivisible. The unity of God includes primary thoughts: the oneness of God and the unity of God's character. The oneness of God refers to the fact that there is **only one Person** in the universe who is the supreme source and ruler of all things (John 17:3; 5:44).

The unity of God's character refers to the truth that His nature is undivided. Original Christianity is based on this unitary monotheism (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29). The God of the Old Testament is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was a unitary monotheist (Mark 12:29).

Christianity in the Roman empire was in constant conflict with paganism. The unity of God naturally became a fundamental doctrine of the apostolic church. Wherever they went, the early missionaries of the church proclaimed the truth of God's oneness. Their converts "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thess. 1:9). They then waited for the Messiah, God's Son, to return from heaven (1 Thess. 1:10). Writing to the church in the idolatrous city of Corinth, Paul asserted: "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. For though there may be so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are gods many and lords many), but to us there is **but one God, the Father**, of whom are all things, and we in him and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things, and we through him" (1 Cor. 8:4-6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). There is one God, one human race, and one mediator between the two. The one God is a unity who alone is the source of all created things. His character is holiness, love, and truth. The one human race has descended from its common ancestors, Adam and Eve. The human race had a common origin and constitutes a unity. The entire human race is in sin and needs salvation. The one mediator is Jesus Christ, the man Messiah, the uniquely and miraculously begotten (brought into existence) Son of God (Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:18, 20; 1 John 5:18, not KJV).

The view of God and Jesus presented in this magazine is based on the indisputable fact that the teachings of Jesus must be the foundation of any genuine Christianity. Jesus insisted as did Paul that the words and teaching of Jesus are fundamental to true Christian faith. Jesus insisted in John 12:44ff, in a last cry aimed at getting our attention, that his words are to be listened to and obeyed. That is because his words are the words of his Father who commissioned him as his unique spokesman. In John 3:36 belief in Jesus is parallel to and equivalent to obeying Jesus. The obedience of faith is the essential basis and framework of genuine Christian faith (see Rom. 1:5; 16:26). Paul warned in the strongest terms that any deviation from the words and teaching of Jesus is to be avoided as a threat to salvation (see 1 Tim.

6:3). It is a fatal confusion to speak vaguely of believing “in the person of Jesus” without believing his teachings and obeying them.

The original faith, which we are all required to contend for and maintain (Jude 3), was certainly not a Trinitarian religion. The definition of God in the teaching of the Hebrew Bible, affirmed by Jesus in agreement with a fellow Jew (Mark 12:29), is a strict unitary monotheism.

How then did we arrive at the confusing denominationalism of today? The departure from Scripture began early in the second century. It was the influence of pagan philosophy which worked as a leaven to undo the essential Messianism of Jesus and the Apostles. In his informative book *How Jesus Became God* Bart Ehrman describes how Justin Martyr was influenced in his understanding of the faith by a previous unrepented allegiance to philosophy. This led him to think of Jesus as existing as an angel and in some sense a second god/God (pp. 323ff).

This disturbed the strict monotheism of Scripture and Jesus. Once Jesus was thought to be a preexisting Son, it was impossible for him also to be the lineal, biological descendant of David (Ps. 132:11). Without that link to David, one cannot be the Messiah. Justin spoke of a “begetting” of the Son which supposedly took place long before his begetting, coming into existence in Mary (Luke 1:35). This twist in the story of Jesus inevitably undermined the essential fact that Jesus must be a genuine member of the human race.

1 John 4:2 warns against the threat of a less-than human Jesus. The real Jesus was the one who came “in the flesh,” that is genuinely a member of the human race. Luther mistranslated (corrected by all modern German versions) John’s words as “coming *into* the flesh” (i.e. German *in das Fleisch*, rather than as John wrote *im Fleisch*, that is as fully human). A preexistent, pre-human Jesus, Son of God, cannot be fully human. One cannot be older than one’s ancestor! The virginal begetting of the Son in Mary was ruined once it was proposed that the Son was already in existence. Justin Martyr was driven by his false philosophical presuppositions to imagine that the Son engineered his own conception!

Justin also fell for a number of serious twistings of Scripture. He taught that in Genesis 19:24 “the LORD rained brimstone and fire from the LORD out of the heavens” implied two LORDs. Instead of recognizing (as any scholar now does) that this is a Hebrew idiom, Justin thought that there were two LORDs! He should have read I Kings 8:1 where “Solomon gathered...to Solomon.” No one imagines that there were two Solomons! Nor two Lamechs in Genesis 4:23!

Once the Son of God’s *origin* by miracle in Mary (Matt. 1:18, *genesis*) was discarded in favor of a twisted version of John 1, producing a preexisting Son of God rather than as John wrote a preexisting word, wisdom and plan of God, fearful conflict and argumentation, disputes, excommunications and disunity followed. Jesus’ unitary monotheism (Mark 12:29) was lost and recovered only by certain minorities (the so-called Dynamic Monarchians).

At the Reformation, the Socinians led a significant movement which recaptured the unitary monotheism of Jesus and the Apostles (Mark 12:29, repeated in 1 Cor. 8:4-6 by Paul). Paul believed in the unitary monotheistic Shema (“Hear, O Israel”) as had Jesus. Without that firm foundation there is little hope for a united, single Christian faith. At present the denominations are unable to pay attention to and put into practice the clear command of Paul: “I urge and entreat you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Messiah that all of you be in perfect harmony and full agreement in what you say and that

there be no dissensions or factions or divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in your common understanding and in your opinions and judgments” (1 Cor. 1:10, Amplified Bible).

For further information about how the faith lost its essential unity soon after the death of the Apostles, please consult the introduction to my *One God, the Father, one Man Messiah Translation* of the New Testament with commentary, available at Amazon.com or Atlanta Bible College (800) 347-4261.

For a succinct definition of who Jesus is, read Luke 2:11, where his birth certificate is clearly announced. He is the Messiah lord, that is the anointed lord. God certainly cannot be born, and cannot be “the anointed.”

And no one in Bible times ever imagined that God could *die*! God is immortal (1 Tim. 6:16), and one who is immortal cannot by definition ever die. Likewise holy angels are immortal (Luke 20:35-36). It is therefore equally impossible that Jesus can ever have been an angel (see Heb. 1:3, 13; Dan 10:13 where Michael is “*one of the chief princes, angels*”). The Son of God is defined with absolute clarity by Luke 1:35 and as the now exalted man Messiah, the “my lord” (mistranslated in many versions as Lord) of Psalm 110:1, a verse beloved by Jesus in Mark 12:35- 36 (cp. Acts 2:34-36), and designed to put all arguments to an end.

1 Timothy 2:5 in its perfect simplicity and clarity can undo the confusion of many centuries — one God and one man, the one mediator who is the Messiah Jesus.