

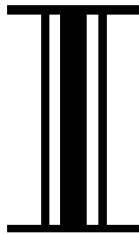
TRUE MONOTHEISM VERSUS NOT-SO-TRUE MONOTHEISM ALSO KNOWN AS FLEXIBLE MONOTHEISM

By

F. Paul Haney, minister & pastor

"Error never shows itself in its naked reality, in order not to be discovered. On the contrary, it dresses elegantly, so that the unwary may be led to believe that it is more truthful than truth itself."

-Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 130-200 AD)



Nour modern world, there must be millions of "ism's."

The suffix "ism" means practice, process, and manner of action, like "Communism." It could designate behavior or behavioral characteristics of a specific thing or group such as a tribe of cannibals; those who practice "cannibalism." In the religious sense, an "ism" can represent a doctrine, a theory, a peculiar view, or even a cult. Christianity, a religion (in its myriad forms called Christendom), has a couple of peculiar "ism's" attached to it. The most popular one and by far the least understood religious "ism" is "Trinitarianism." It represents the popular, orthodox, or mainstream Christian "ism." In probing this common "ism," it being the acknowledged core of Christianity, we immediately run into trouble. The central defining doctrine of Christianity is a sacred cow. And like many such cows, this one defies logic. One becomes baffled by the murky, incoherent explanations offered. Therefore, the trinitarian sacred cow devolves to an incomprehensible mystery. No one, not one person, I charge, can logically explain trinitarianism except according to the anti-Jewish motivations of its ancient Roman creators. I defy anyone to explain the trinitarian formula in reasonable, lucid, and understandable terms, without resorting to the claim that it is a "*mystery of God we finite mortals just cannot understand*." I declare, it cannot be done.

One analogy of the Trinity is "water, steam, and ice." But two factors are simply "modes" of basic water and represent "Modalism"; not individual units.

To be “one” being or one person at the same time you are multiple beings or persons is outrageous and irrational. The idea that Jesus and the Father are “one” can only be understood in the analogous sense, not in substance. Only by suspending sound judgment and submitting to mythological tales can the three-Gods-in-one-God formula of trinitarianism be accepted on *faith*.

The greatest teachers of trinitarianism throw up their hands and assert it to be an “unknowable mystery” at the same time they *insist that it is found in the Bible*. If one cannot understand or know this doctrine, how did they even find it?

“*The triune mystery of God is the central mystery of the Christian faith and life; thus the doctrinal formulation about the nature of this God is the source of all other mysteries of the faith*” (one-volume *Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, p.1270). The editor admits: “*The doctrine of the Trinity as such is not revealed in either the OT or the NT; however, the essential elements of what eventually became the doctrine are contained in Scripture...* [Of course the essential elements are there! The Father and the son and the holy spirit are all mentioned. But any *combining* of three “essential” elements into one God-being cannot be found in the Bible. Rather, the combination is a later creation of man. FPH]

“*... The Trinitarian doctrine as such emerged in the fourth century, due largely to the efforts of Athanasius and the Cappadocians (Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa), who responded to the doctrinal challenges of Arius and Eunomius about the status of Jesus Christ*” (pp. 1270-71).

I wanted to get an expert opinion on the Trinity so my wife and I went to a Barnes and Noble book store. I found a book entitled: “*The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Understanding Catholicism*.” Now, I was getting somewhere. To my utter amazement, there was NO entry in the Idiot’s Guide at all for the Trinity. Further, there were no entries for the Trinity in the section on “God.” I abandoned the Idiot’s Guide and picked up the book entitled: “*Catholicism for Dummies*.” But I was no more successful in the Dummies’ book than in the Idiot’s Guide. Although the Trinity was mentioned in the Dummies book, it was not defined. This was really beginning to be a mystery. In desperation, I obtained a copy of “*The Encyclopedia of Stupidity*.” No luck there either.

Not willing to give up that easily, I found an entry for the Trinity in my CD copy of the *Roman Catholic Encyclopedia*. Under the heading *The Trinity as a Mystery* this encyclopedia candidly states: “*In other words, our understanding of it remains only partial, even after we have accepted it as part of the Divine message. Through analogies and types we can form a representative concept expressive of what is revealed [they say!], but we cannot attain that fuller knowledge which supposes that the various elements of the concept are clearly grasped and their reciprocal compatibility manifest.*” The Catholic community has no understanding of what they must accept. And Protestants are in the same boat, since they have, in turn, simply adopted the Roman Catholic invention of the trinity.

In spite of this frank Roman Catholic admission, some persons try to insert logic into the illogical. What great religion, then, I ask, can truly be defined as a “mystery religion”? —Is it the belief system that maintains “one singular God



being” according to plain Scriptures, or can the mystery religion (**Rev.17:5**) be trinitarianism and one of its intimate daughters, binitarianism? And if trinitarianism is the core doctrine of a great mystery religion, which it certainly is, how must we view binitarianism, since the leaders of this novel belief system adopted an adjusted trinitarian formula (three Gods in one versus 2 Gods + millions in one)? Three in one, two in one, millions in one... The difference is only a matter of degrees.

One “ism” *wrongly* associated with the great religious system called Christianity is “monotheism.” Historically, in proto-Christianity, monotheism was appropriated from the Old Testament and misapplied to the resultant creation of a multiplicity of gods. And for the most part, Rome’s daughter churches, even Protestantism, bought the package. **But in reality, monotheism stands apart and aloof from trinitarianism, binitarianism, and any other “ism” that supports more than one God-being.** All multiple-God, multiple-Being, and multiple-Person religions are rationally defined as the practice of polytheism. In the final analysis and for our purposes, only two valid “ism’s” are up for grabs today. They are Monotheism and Polytheism.

As you no doubt know, there exist a number of contrasting “ism’s” within the Christian religion. And one of them is *not* polytheism. This is not surprising: all Christian advocates run like the wind from the word “polytheism” because of the stigma attached to it. Therefore, all offshoots of the Roman Christian system (including Armstrong binitarianism) claim to represent “Biblical Monotheism”. This is the little-mentioned problem with flexible monotheism systems: *they dare not correctly define their worship models* because they would be branded Practitioners of Polytheism. And they would be disgraced and dishonored. Yet polytheism it truly and honestly is.

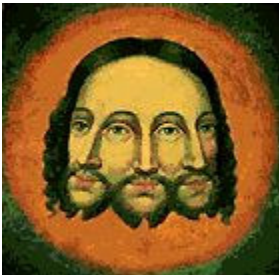
Monotheism, a stand-alone word, precisely defines the worship and support of one individual being we commonly call “God,” more properly named “Yahweh,” as best scholars can tell. But practitioners of flexible monotheism, in their worship of cleverly formulated and combined God-persons, even a family of Gods, have disqualified themselves according to Yahweh’s revealed system of worship. **“Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is no other God but one.* For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us *there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we for him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through who are all things, and through whom we live*’ (1Cor.8:4-7).**

Every belief system that purports to define God as some sort of being falls within one of two categories: *monotheism or polytheism*. This includes what I have dubbed *Flexible Monotheism*. Flexible Monotheism, as opposed to “strict” monotheism, “true” monotheism, or “biblical” monotheism, is the painfully incoherent belief system that posits a farfetched and fantastic notion that several gods can be clumped into a single category called by the name “God.” Thereby all these assorted and inserted “Gods” mysteriously become one God that somehow manages to satisfy their redefined portrayal of monotheism.

“Biblical Monotheism,” like the word “unique,” cannot be modified, only represented: the one true God is a singular being. But for the sake of the qualifiers who may hear or read this presentation, “true monotheism” is “biblical” monotheism is “pure” monotheism, is “strict” monotheism, or simply, the monotheism taught and supported by the overwhelming majority of texts found within the Holy Bible, beginning in the book of Genesis. And it is this vast majority of biblical texts that are ignored or twisted in “Flexible Monotheistic” religions in favor of a relatively few obscure ones. No matter, the representatives of the various so-called monotheistic Christian faiths and creeds (as embodied in a vast assortment of “True” churches today) would agree with the definition of biblical monotheism of “one God” and readily adopt it into their creeds. They would say, “Oh, yes—that’s us alright. We support “true” biblical monotheism.”

Over the years, meddling monks and a variety of religious persons, groups, malicious counsels, sects, and other assorted assemblies, and even pernicious individuals have set their busy little minds at “clarifying” the Scriptures for us dunderheads. They did so by generating distinct church dogma, establishing a multitude of traditions, adjusting biblical passages by lifting and shifting them, reinventing definitions for common terms, or simply creating yet another exotic doctrine that is more to their liking. These busybodies have been hard at work, and with the exercise of significant power over against their detractors, they have intimidated or duped millions of the faithful.

Monotheism, true biblical monotheism, has been the victim over the centuries, right up to our modern times, of an *Extreme Makeover*. And to many religious people, she looks a whole lot better.



As a result, we have today, several forms of “true” monotheism, as puzzling as that may sound. This situation did not come about accidentally. In my view, Christian orthodoxy, and the orthodoxy of the factions we now see and address, came about as a result of religious zealots wanting the Bible to agree with *their* particular religious point of view. The proto-Roman Christians weren’t about to create dogma that would *not* favor their views. And when it came to the peculiar and controversial issue of the nature of God and Christ, something happened on the way to the printer. The singular God of the Bible was hijacked and given a new set of clothes and several heads. The singular God (Yahweh) of the Bible that the apostles worshiped and that Christ himself worshiped morphed into a strange and foreign “God” that at the same time as being one, was three in number, yet was not divisible as three in number. The “God” as now represented by general Christian orthodoxy became a three-faced monster. In our time, within the last sixty some odd years, this three-faced monster-God split off into two separate gods, then finally into millions and billions of Gods, God-beings, Goddesses, or other God-like entities of the “God Kind” all radiating from one God-body. What happened was a virtual explosion of Gods under the tutelage of Herbert W. Armstrong. And this explosion of Gods, commonly and fondly called “binitarianism,” has become, in the Armstrong camp, a sacred cow and the ultimate master of their destiny.

Make no mistake: The issue or the doctrine of the nature of God *must be* the foundation upon which the Christian church lives and grows. Salvation demands this. It can be no other way. But if there is a kind of wood-rot in the nature-of-God foundation of an organization, it can mean nothing but an ultimate and final collapse of the whole corporate structure, no matter what other correct doctrines might be held. The very first commandment testifies to the fact that Yahweh is the singular foundation of his revealed religious system. *Have no other gods before me. Have no lesser gods, have no greater gods, have no equal gods, and have no gods made of inanimate matter or flesh.* **“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me” (Ex.20:2-3).** The second and third Commandments echo this theme. God is saying: “PAY ATTENTION! I AM SPECIAL! I AM UNIQUE!”

Monotheism is characteristic of the Old Testament. **“I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides me. I will gird you, though you have not known me, that they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting that there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things” (Isa.45:5-6; cf. Deut. 32:39; Isa.43:11; 44:6; 45:21; Hos.13:4).** Notice the “I, I, I,” repetition—over and over, and “I, the [singular] Lord, do all these things.”

“You are my witnesses. Is there a God besides me? Indeed there is no other rock; I know not one” (Isa.44:8b). The Creator is the same Yahweh that brought the Israelites out of Egypt. He was unaware of any of any other God in any sense *except* as created by mankind. If Yahweh knew of no other God, how is it that so many professing Christians know of more than one?

In due time Yahweh might say: “Who told you there was another God? Did I tell you there was another God? I didn’t tell you there was another God! There is no other God!!!”

Monotheism is characteristic of the New Testament as well in spite of those who testify otherwise. What is the first or greatest commandment of all?

“Jesus answered him, ‘The first of all the commandments *is*: ‘Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is* the first commandment. And the second, like *it*, *is* this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.’ So the scribe said to him, ‘Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but he” (Mk.12:29-32). Notice how the scribe defines Jesus’ response of “the Lord is one.” He adds the singular personal pronoun within the phrase: “there is no other but he.” Notice also the distinct lack of flexibility in all these monotheistic declarations. This “greatest commandment” echoes the “Shema” of the Old Testament. **“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one!” (Deut.6:4).** The Shema, like other one-God assertions, was not written in a vacuum. In context, the “Lord our God” is mentioned a bit earlier and identified clearly as a singular being. Consider the singular pronouns. **“...that you may**

fear the LORD your God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments” (Deut.6:2a). And later: “You shall fear the LORD your God and serve him, and shall take oaths in his name” (Deut.6:14, cf. v.10). Some professing believers even turn the Shema into evidence of a “Family of Gods.”****

At present, the authentic God of the Bible and his true nature has become unidentifiable and undiscoverable within the various multi-god “ism’s.” *And all this happened under the guise of “true” monotheism.* And true to form, most proponents of the trinitarian and binitarian systems would swear on their mother’s graves that what they are presenting in their multiple-god practice is actually monotheism. They are really sincere, but sincerely wrong.

In the final analysis, what binitarians (especially) are practicing is merely a cleverly massaged version of ancient polytheism, which is the worship and support of two or more gods. On top of this, binitarianism, or Flexible Monotheism has a fundamental and necessary alliance with Roman Catholicism—only some terms have been changed. Like a good inventor, I think, Herbert Armstrong reengineered trinitarianism to suit his purposes. Thus, binitarianism and Roman Catholicism are joined at the hip. I think our binitarian friends would have been warmly welcomed at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD.

Let me assure you this bizarre hijacking of the nature of God began in formative or primitive Christianity, like an aggressive form of cancer, turning the nature of God into a form of Christological abuse, beginning even as early as the second and third centuries AD. By the year 400 AD, the hijacking was largely successful. Not only was God Almighty hijacked, but so was the Messiah, the true Christ, the agent of God. Back then, the chaotic and feverish drive to reject the practice of Judaism, which the early Roman church mistakenly thought to be the core religion of the Old Testament, was awfully strong. Power struggles and power vacuums facilitated the Roman religion. Other “ism’s” called Gnosticism and Arianism drove the primitive Roman church into a frenzied effort to establish the “right” or “orthodox” religion. The hate that was manifested and generated in those early years is nothing short of astounding when one reflects upon the “Christian” ethics that these very religious people were supposed to be upholding. We discover that the brutish representatives of the “early church” were not so pious and virtuous after all. The “loving” God that the primitive orthodox Roman church represented seemed somehow to turn many of those leaders of the new federated system into power-mad murderers and thugs.

The primary Christian form of “true” monotheism we face today as it was forced upon the faithful down through the centuries is not monotheism at all (at least not in the “pure” or “strict” sense) but rather trinitarianism. This is a strange but familiar word. It represents the theology of trinitarians, people with whom you and I rub shoulders every day, and it is the hub of the Christological faith. It also, being known to the world as Christianity, represents, it is said, one of the three “great monotheistic religions.” But, at the same time, as important as the doctrine of the Trinity is to orthodox Christianity, few persons who worship within the rigid embrace of this three-god dogma have any clear or rational idea whatsoever of what or who they are worshipping. This is trinity-ism in its natural or rather unnatural state. Trinitarianism is irrational and illogical. Actually the

practice should more correctly be defined as “**tritheism**” (three gods) which practice devolves to the worship and support of multiple gods that we know as old-fashioned *polytheism*. Today, as in the past, there is much disagreement about how God manifests himself. The “official” church position on the Trinity concerning the nature of God goes something like this: *God is one “essence” who is manifested as three “persons.” These three persons are identified as The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. These three persons or spirit beings are all co-eternal, co-equal, and beyond your understanding. They are all God individually yet there are not three Gods but one God.* Similar gibberish can be found in binitarianism. The latter-day practitioners of “binitarianism” are enthusiastic and sometimes slavish followers of the late Herbert W. Armstrong (HWA), founder of the now-defunct sabbatarian Worldwide Church of God.

In most coherent circles, any religious model that espouses two or more gods is “polytheism.” However, binitarian groups and individuals will seriously argue with you over this particular definition. They don’t like it. They can’t bear it. And they must reject it. But they have no choice, regardless of how many “Gods” are within their theology: they publicize only their “monotheism.”

Caution: For many reasons, binitarian doctrines have been created that in some minds, establishes Jesus as an eternal God. We rightly think that is a gross error. But it has been said that we should never attribute to malice, those things that can be adequately explained by ignorance, foolishness, or sheer stupidity, so we should tread softly, if possible, upon doctrines of men: they are not necessarily doctrines of demons. These particular manmade doctrines should be soundly defeated, but the men themselves should not be despised. Yet, for the sake of others, we must defeat these errant doctrines of men.

Armstrong binitarian advocates claim God is one, then two, then a family, then a kingdom of God(s) *in embryo* (or not), then ultimately God will be millions and billions of individual God-beings flying from planet to planet in the universe. And, without cracking a smile, they claim that this doctrine represents *true monotheism*, one single God, believe it or not! After all their clever maneuverings and incoherent so-called “proofs,” they say God is one and do it with a straight face. Binitarianism as usually presented is *Flexible Monotheism* in the most laughable sense. Armstrong Binitarianism does not pass the “**Straight Face Test.**”



MAN WILL BECOME GODS!

Herbert W. Armstrong wrote: “*Man has the potentiality of becoming GOD! ... By the very fact that God, through man, is reproducing Himself, we know MAN, when his spiritual creation is completed, shall actually become GOD!*” (*The Good News*, 9/79, article, “*Your Children—FUTURE GODS?*” p.4).

There is more: “*But we shall also be, as priests, co-saviors with him in saving the world*” (*Mystery of the Ages*, HWA, p.240). According to this popular Armstrong “binitarian” camp Church of God (COG) doctrine, *certain* humans are to be Gods, Creators, Co-Saviors, and nothing less!

Has this idea surfaced before? You bet. This human ruler-God idea was widespread in Greece and Rome many years ago.



◆ THE GOD "KIND" AND SUPERNATURAL BODIES

Hard-core (and mostly sincere) binitarians ardently support God the Father, God the Son, God the Family, God the Kingdom, the God "kind," and Gods, the Children. Herbert Armstrong wrote: *"For remember, the word 'God' in Genesis 1:1, comes to us from the Hebrew word Elohim. Elohim means one God—not many gods. But that one God is a divine Family—a Kingdom"* (HWA Booklet, *Why Were You Born?* 1957, 1972). Elohim, the late Armstrong asserted (and his followers are in rigid lockstep with him on this) means a family of distinct and separate God-beings often called the God Kind." This is one of the more foolish and laughable aspects of latter-day binitarianism.

Armstrong binitarian people, beginning with Herbert Armstrong himself, created out of whole cloth, the notion of the "God Kind." As ridiculous as this doctrine is to perceptive thinkers, it has taken legs inside the binitarian camp. Many sincere followers, having apparently nowhere else to turn, have accepted this doctrine. Notice, I said "inside the binitarian camp." Not *outside*. No, no. They do not teach this *God-Kind, man becoming Gods* business when they try to recruit people outside their camp to their distinctive belief system. The reason they do not teach this doctrine to outsiders should be obvious; the "God Kind Doctrine" and the "Man Becoming Gods as God is God Doctrine" is antithetical, even hostile, to sound biblical principles. In this regard I wrote letters to three prominent and popular binitarian preachers.

(1) On January 02, 2004, I wrote to Roderick C. Meredith, the editor of Tomorrow's World Magazine. In part, my letter said:

"Dear Sir, ... My question to you, if you don't mind: Since you support the concept of man becoming God, why do you not advertise this fact openly and candidly in your magazine articles or during your television or radio programs? If you have already spoken on this concept on your TV/radio programs (or in the magazine), would it be possible for me to obtain a copy of those broadcasts (or articles)? Certainly, let me know the cost and I will send that to you. If, however, you do not broadcast or advertise the concept (of man becoming God) in your TV/radio programs, or in the magazine, I would like to ask why you do not? Your response will be greatly appreciated. Thank you."

- To date, no response has been received.

(2) On January 02, 2004, I wrote to Ray Wooten, pastor of United Christian Ministries. In part, my letter said:

"Dear Ray, ... Some time ago, you published a booklet wherein I believe you stated that Jesus was God and that the destiny for man is to be born into the 'God Family.'" (I'm paraphrasing, now.) On a number of your sermon audiocassettes you restate your belief that Jesus is God and also that people are to be born into the God Family.

During the "old days" of the WCG, the doctrine of man becoming Gods was openly taught as a person's possible destiny, both in writing and, I believe, on the air. I believe that you support the standard Armstrong doctrine that man's potential is to become Gods alongside Jesus. (If this is not true, please advise me of the change as well as your current belief.) My question to you, if you don't

mind: Since you apparently support the concept of men and women becoming Gods, why do you not advertise this fact openly and candidly in your magazine articles or during your taped sermons?

If you have already spoken on the concept that man's destiny is to become Gods within your sermons (or in the magazine), would it be possible for me to obtain a copy of those sermons (or articles)? Certainly, let me know the cost and I will send that to you. If, however, you do not preach on or advertise the theory of man becoming Gods in your sermons or in your magazine, why you do not advertise that you believe man may become Gods? Your response will be greatly appreciated. Thank you."

- To date, no response has been received.

(3) On December 25, 2003, I wrote to Ronald L. Dart of CEM Ministries. In part, my letter went this way:

"Dear Ron, ... During the "old days" of the WCG, the doctrine of man becoming God was openly taught as a person's possible destiny, both in writing and, I believe, on the air. My question to you, if you don't mind, is this: Since you do support the concept of man becoming God, and have done so in writing, do you broadcast this concept in the Born to Win programs? If you do or rather, if you have already spoken on this concept in the BTW programs, would it be possible for me to obtain a copy (or copies) of those broadcasts? Certainly, let me know the cost and I will send that to you. If, however, you do not broadcast the concept (of man becoming God) in your BTW programs, I would like to ask why you do not? Your response will be greatly appreciated. Thank you."

• To date, no response has been received. Perhaps all these letters got lost in the mail. In any case, I would be pleased to hear from these gentlemen if they were now to respond.

According to www.abcog.org/trinity.htm, Ronald L. Dart made the following statement regarding the trinity and monotheism:

"Dart's personal Creed on what the Bible means by the Oneness of God: **I believe that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit [and whatever else is yet to be revealed] are all God and are one in the sense that they are united in spirit and in purpose.** *Ronald L. Dart, evangelist, 8-22-2002*

I think it is revealing that Mr. Dart, an avowed binitarian of the Armstrong kind, seems to accept orthodox individual personhood of all three entities, while cleverly leaving the door open for humans to become Gods as God is God.

Lowering God to the level of created animals, sincere supporters of binitarianism have suggested that because *man* has devised a way to classify animals in families of various "kinds," this method can apply to God. Take dogs, for instance. Within the family of dogs (plural), each member is a singular dog yet belongs to the dog "kind." Binitarians have attached this manmade system to God. They suggest that because animal life was created after their various "kinds" (**Gen.1:24-25**), then when God said "**Let us make man in our image**" (**Gen.1:26**), he was really saying "let us make man after our *kind of beings*." (Typically, binitarians ignore v.27.) Never mind that the subject passage does not even imply a God "kind."

Another problem with this notion of is that there are, technically, only three

kinds of beings of which we know: God (Yahweh), angels, and animals. (I would add one more type to this list. That would be *an immortal human being in the unique category of the resurrected Christ*.) Man is classified as part of the “animal” kingdom. All within the animal kingdom reproduce after their “kind.” The term *mankind* also militates against the idea of God reproducing after his “kind” because man is a “kind” of being in his own right. As a “kind,” God is in a unique category. The word “image” in Genesis does not suggest something in *addition* to that which the image is being reflected from nor does it suggest anything more than an image. Then Adam and Eve, *created in the image of God*, were *not* the same *kind* of beings that God happened to be at the time they were created! If they were, then God was a human being. God did not create Adam and Eve as a God “kind.” They were flesh and blood persons all their lives. So, being made in the “image” of God must mean something else entirely.

The binitarian theology of a God “kind” lowers God to a created level, the level of the unexceptional and the common by saying that God is creating after himself people that make up the God “kind.” Some try to make their case on this point by suggesting that the word “Elohim” effectively means “God kind.” This is nonsense. Now certainly, Yahweh is a “kind” of being. But this singular point of truth does the binitarian case no good. Yahweh is the ONLY being of his “kind.” Yahweh is debased by binitarian doctrine, perhaps even unwittingly, because binitarian practitioners make themselves equal to God. They will be Gods!

Look under the skin of a dog and you discover that Fido is little different from Spot or any other dog. Doubting Thomas had an opportunity to literally “look under the skin” of the risen Christ (**Jn.20:27**). Had he really looked, and I think he did, Thomas would have found flesh and bone, proving that Jesus was still a part of mankind. Jesus clearly said that he was not a spirit being. In effect, Jesus said, “I am NOT a spirit!” And he was still a human of some sort for at least forty (40) days after his resurrection. Jesus (Yahshua) was a “glorified” human being. He was neither a spirit nor a natural man—he was *supernatural*—yet he was not a God because God is spirit. This ought to be self-evident.

“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have” (Lk.24:39). The resurrected Jesus was not a spirit. I do not know what he is now, of course, but then, neither does anyone else, apart from guessing and pure speculation. I suggest that God can cause our flesh and bones to become immortal and at the same time, give each of us protection from the natural elements as we travel to and from the throne of God in *supernatural spiritual* (yet not spirit) bodies.

In describing the one true God, Jesus himself is quoted as saying: **“God is spirit...” (Jn.4:24).** Will resurrected humans become spirit beings? I do not know and the Bible does not say. And man’s “logic” or “reasoning” does not work here. Nevertheless, those persons colonizing the binitarian camp tell us they are going to be “Gods” just as God is God. This means they are going to become great and awesome spirit beings of the “God Kind” in a “family of Gods.”

Not even the biblical writer John knew what kind of bodies any resurrected believers would have (**1Jn.3:2**). The bodies, he wrote, would be “like” the Messiah’s body. The word “like” carries a whole host of definitional nuances. A

few: “similar, equal, of the same form or shape, having almost or exactly the same qualities or characteristics, somewhat resembling, characteristic of, and a counterpart of.” The apostle Paul (a strict monotheist) did not know what kind of a body believers would have after the resurrection except that it would be spiritual (notice, he did not say made of spirit) and incorruptible (**1Cor.15:35ff**). We will be “like” the resurrected Jesus, but we will not be “like” God, except in a much lesser sense. In his resurrected form of flesh and bones, Yahshua was apparently able to travel through space, maybe even through doors. You might recall that “all power” in heaven and earth was given to him. **“The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand” (Jn.3:35; cf. Matt.28:18)**. He floated toward heaven until the clouds hid him from view (**Acts 1:9**). This kind of “space travel” was one of those powers given to the Messiah, and, I might add, one of the powers reborn and resurrected saints might have.

Of a truth, binitarianism (as we know it) supposedly describes the practice of binitarians, but if you have been paying attention, all is not what it seems to be. All is not well in the binitarian camp. Binitarianism is properly descriptive of folks who support the doctrine of two co-equal Gods in heaven or perhaps one God in heaven and one God on the earth as in *Dualism*. The word “bini” means two.

But another hijacking after the order of Romanism has taken place under our very noses. Those persons who identify themselves as “binitarians” are *not really* two-God people, they say. No, once again with a straight face and usually without a nod and a wink, they will tell you that they are practicing “true” monotheism. I wish they *would* nod and wink or elbow me in the side when they make such outrageous claims; at least that would be more honest, more straightforward, and I would know they are joking. Worse, and more seriously, they certainly do not present their multiple-god practice up front to the world as they attempt to evangelize society. In my mind, the general binitarian deception on this point (like the trinitarian fraud) is reprehensible and blameworthy.

So now we have two primary factions demanding attention in our religious perception today. In our particular “One-God” circle, right now, I am presenting “true monotheism” over against “not-so-true monotheism”—the *“wink and nod”* monotheism of Armstrong binitarianism or *Flexible Monotheism*. The leaders of flexible binitarian monotheism have had a number of years to indoctrinate our brothers and sisters with their form of worship. They have taught their disciples well in how to stretch monotheism to cover a multitude of gods. We “One God” people are in the position of playing “catch-up” but we are making tremendous strides.

The fact of the business is, when you decide who or what you will worship and support, you have created a “God” of your own making. Remember this line. That decision belongs to Yahweh. He decides whom he will call—you merely decide whether or not to respond. If you do respond, then the “who to worship” is set: It is Yahweh. But when you decide who or what you will worship and support, you have created a “God” of your own making. Indeed, since binitarian folks frequently claim they are going to be “Gods” in their own right (as well as co-saviors and co-creators), they have in fact made gods in their own image. I must say they have a lot of nerve. The first thing they did was adopt an

extra God from Roman Catholicism. Then they created a series of *anticipated* human-gods of their own making. And many of our brethren are sticking with it in spite of any reservations they might have. In our evaluation and criticism of binitarianism, we must never lose sight of the binitarian ultimate avowed goal: *that of becoming almighty Gods themselves*. This is the heady stuff that keeps binitarian practitioners from rejecting binitarianism: *they want to become Gods*.

Satan devised a scheme that deceived Adam and Eve. He suggested that they could be just like God (**Gen.3:4**). The binitarian is teaching that Armstrong followers will become Gods as God is God. I see little difference between the two schemes.

“True” monotheism is found in the Bible. So is “not-so-true” flexible monotheism but it comes under a different name. Not-so-true monotheism (binitarianism and trinitarianism) are called polytheism or multiple-god worship, two or more gods. The only true God of the Bible frowns on polytheism and supporters of both theologies know it well. I am sure that Yahweh regards their practice (especially of their leadership) as an abomination.

Finally, in the Dec.31, 2004 issue of *The Journal*, not only did I find four (4) articles supporting the late Herbert Armstrong’s general theological positions or testifying that he was indeed God’s apostle and one (1) letter to the editor outlining twenty-one (21) of his false prophecies, I found this crafty and pathetic gem presenting what a writer calls “*The Plainer Truth*” about Elohim and Monotheism. The writer is an outspoken advocate of a form of binitarianism.

He wrote: “*Biblical monotheism means one God kind, not one being! And the kind has become one God family! ... Polytheism is the belief in multiple kinds, not multiple beings. ... The one Elohim is a kind of being... There is only one kind of spirit being that is true Elohim. ... God the kind is becoming a family named after God the Father.*” —So much for the “Plainer” Truth. ☺

Much of the merchandise of binitarianism is a failed attempt at a manipulation of common words and terms but monotheism is “the doctrine or belief that there is only one God (being). God: “*Any of various beings conceived of as supernatural or immortal, having special powers over people, nature, deity, esp. a male deity. In monotheistic religions, the creator and ruler of the universe; the Supreme Being; Almighty.*” Polytheism is “*belief in or the worship of many gods or more than one god: opposed to monotheism*”(Webster).

● **PERSONAL EXAMPLES OF “TRUE” MONOTHEISM**

True Monotheism is pictured in a series of passages in **Psalm 78**, called a “*contemplation of Asaph*.” Apparently, Asaph considered the God of the Old Testament as one personal being, not two, as our binitarian friends would tell you, and certainly not three as orthodox Christianity demands. In the following lines of the Psalm 78 (NKJV), which has been greatly condensed, personal singular pronouns referencing to a singular God are used, count them, **eighty-six (86) times**. It has been said that some 20,000 such personal singular pronouns can be found in the Bible, virtually all of which are ignored in the binitarian camp. You can follow along in your own Bible.

- ⁴ **Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD,
And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.**

5 **For He established a testimony in Jacob,**
Which He commanded our fathers, ...
But keep His commandments;
10 They refused to walk in His law,
11 And forgot His works
And His wonders that He had shown them.
12 Marvelous things He did in the sight of their fathers,
13 He divided the sea...;
And He made the waters stand up like a heap.
14 He led them with the cloud,
15 He split the rocks in the wilderness,
16 He also brought streams out of the rock,
17 But they sinned even more against Him
By rebelling against the Most High in the wilderness.
18 And they tested God in their heart ...
20 Behold, He struck the rock,
Can He give bread also?
Can He provide meat for His people?
22 And did not trust in His salvation.
23 Yet He had commanded the clouds above,
25 He sent them food to the full.
26 He caused an east wind to blow in the heavens;
And by His power He brought in the south wind.
27 He also rained meat on them like the dust,
28 And He let *them* fall in the midst of their camp,
29 For He gave them their own desire.
32 AND did not believe in His wondrous works.
33 Therefore their days He consumed in futility,
34 When He slew them, then they sought Him; ...
36 Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth,
And they lied to Him with their tongue;
37 For their heart was not steadfast with Him,
Nor were they faithful in His covenant.
38 But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity,
Yes, many a time He turned His anger away,
And did not stir up all His wrath;
39 For He remembered that they *were but* flesh,
40 How often they provoked Him in the wilderness,
And grieved Him in the desert!
42 They did not remember His power:
The day when He redeemed them from the enemy,
43 When He worked His signs in Egypt,
And His wonders in the field of Zoan;
45 He sent swarms of flies
46 He also gave their crops to the caterpillar,
47 He destroyed their vines with hail,

48 **He** also gave up their cattle to the hail,
49 **He** cast on them the fierceness of His anger,
50 **He** made a path for His anger;
He did not spare their soul from death,
52 But **He** made **His** own people go forth like sheep,
53 And **He** led them on safely,
54 And **He** brought them to His holy border,
This mountain *which* **His** right hand had acquired.
55 **He** also drove out the nations before them,
56 they tested and provoked **the Most High God**,
And did not keep **His** testimonies,
58 For they provoked **Him** to anger
And moved **Him** to jealousy
59 When God heard *this*, **He** was furious,
60 So that **He** forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh,
The tent **He** had placed among men,
61 And delivered **His** strength into captivity,
And **His** glory into the enemy's hand.
62 **He** also gave **His** people over to the sword,
And was furious with **His** inheritance.
66 And **He** beat back **His** enemies;
He put them to a perpetual reproach.
67 Moreover **He** rejected the tent of Joseph,
68 Mount Zion which **He** loved.
69 And **He** built **His** sanctuary like the heights,
Like the earth which **He** has established forever.
70 **He** also chose David **His** servant,
71 **He** brought him
to shepherd Jacob **His** people,
and Israel **His** inheritance.

The Most High, their Redeemer, God (Elohim), The Most High God (Elohim), and the LORD (Yahweh) are all one and the same in Psalm 78.

So, in the light of the great number of personal pronouns throughout the Bible which refer to a singular being called God, Yahweh, Elohim, the Most High God, or the Lord, there can be no reasonable argument against God as one singular being. And when we read **Genesis 1:26**, we must be careful to always read it in context along with **verse 27** wherein you will find similar relevant personal pronouns. That is the honest way of dealing with the passage. The dishonest way is to pull verse 26 out of context as a proof text and to try to split God into multiple beings or persons.

²⁶ “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion... ²⁷So God created man in **His** *OWN* image; in the image of God **He** created him; male and female **He** created them” (Gen.1:26-27). What happened to the multiple God of binitarianism? Who does “our” represent? It was the “host of Heaven” (**Gen.3:22; 1Ki.22:19-23; Rev.5:8, 11**). We have seen some scriptural evidence of “True” biblical

Monotheism. Most binitarians hate to cite Gen.1:27 in addition to 1:26 because it destroys their proof text. The words “He” and “His” represent a single solitary being doing the creating. It is the same being mentioned above as “God” or in the Hebrew, “Elohim,” even Yahweh. All the Scriptures are replete with this kind of singular-God testimony, if you have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Since I do not have time in this presentation to debate all the binitarian nonsense and foolishness, I can only offer a few examples of the differences are between the two factions of Monotheism and Not-So-True Monotheism, which, contrary to its binitarian (and trinitarian) supporters, is equal to polytheism.

As mentioned earlier, I am unable to cite a biblical example of “not-so-true” flexible monotheism as such because nothing of the sort exists, but I am able to cite warnings against polytheism and more testimony to the one true God, according to personal pronouns. **“Who *is* like You, O LORD, among the gods?” (Ex.15:11). “You shall have no other gods before Me” (Ex.20:3). “For the LORD your God *is* God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome...” (Deut.10:17). “You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. He *is* your praise, and He *is* your God” (Deut.10:20-21). He and only he is your God—him you will worship. Why do so many religious people, professing Christians, fight against the one true God? And the testimony of Jesus Christ himself is a slap in the face of binitarian/polytheism practitioners.**

“And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (Jn.17:3). Jesus is not God.

◆ **THE MOST HIGH GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

Binitarians, those who practice a “not-so-true flexible monotheism” (polytheism), will tell you that Jesus Christ is *not* “The Most High” God. They will say that the Most High God is the Father. They are right (**Mk.5:7**). Yet, in spite of passages to the contrary, they go on to testify before the face of the only true God, the Most High God, and man, that Jesus was the God of the Old Testament and that it was Jesus (in another form) who gave the Ten Commandments to Moses and spoke to the people. If Jesus were the God of the OT, he said there was no one else at his side—no father, no other being at all! No matter how you slice it, only one God existed then and it was either Yahweh or Jesus.

Daniel reminded King Belshazzar who the Most High God happened to be. His father, King Nebuchadnezzar, found this out the hard way. Pride entered the king and the throne was taken from him. **“They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever he chooses. But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this” (Dan.5:21-23).** Notice the present-tense construction of the sentence. Contrary to the beliefs of binitarians, Satan does not rule the earth; the Most High God rules the earth. Belshazzar was headed for a downfall. Earlier, Daniel testified that the God whom he served, the same one he referred to as the “Most High God” whom he said rules in the affairs of men, was the God of the OT who was able to save Daniel and his friends from a fiery furnace. **“If that *is* the case, our God whom we serve is able to**

deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us from your hand, O king” (Dan.3:17). They served the Father; they did not serve Christ as the “word” nor did they serve any other lesser spiritual being. The Most High God and the God of the Old Testament are one and the same being.

The very same God (Yahweh) who chose the children of Israel is the same God of Daniel. **“For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for himself” (Deut.7:6).**

“But because the LORD loves you, and because he would keep the oath which he swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Therefore know that the LORD your God, he is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love him and keep his commandments” (Deut.7:8). The Commandments given at Sinai were the Commandments of Yahweh, the Most High God who rules in the kingdoms of men, not Jesus in another form. **“This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, ‘These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation’ ” (Acts 16:17).** Paul and Silas were servants of the Most High God.

◆ **GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT A HIDDEN BINITARIAN SECRET!**

This is a warning to us all. The Most High God is shown to be actively working within the kingdoms of men; he is not sitting back waiting for the world to run down or run out of time. The House of God is being judged today—right now! If you are one of God’s children, you are being judged. **“For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1Pet.4:17).** Notice, it is the gospel of GOD that must be obeyed.

Binitarians have the habit of taking perfectly good and useful information from the Bible and hammering it into an Armstrong mold in order to bolster, buttress, and nourish their distinctive polytheistic belief system.

The hidden purpose of the binitarian argument is being exposed! Their hidden purpose is that Armstrong binitarians want to become ruling Gods! If Jesus is *not* God, then they will *not* become Gods, either. This is the “dirty little secret” they do not want you to advertise. Some of the faithful in the Armstrong camp may honestly tell you that this is not their goal. I accept that. I believe them. But they are silently supporting their leaders’ dogma to become Gods. Silence in this case is not golden—it is convicting. I repeat: *Becoming world-ruling all-powerful Gods is the hidden goal of HWA binitarianism.* This is the agenda of many binitarian leaders and they are leading their silent and often intimidated followers into a pit. Note the following *published* admission from a vocal member (not a preacher) of the binitarian polytheist camp:

“The kingdom of God will be the GOD FAMILY -- a superbly and highly trained and organized family of GOD BEINGS.”

To my knowledge, no binitarian, preacher or otherwise, ever disagreed this bald-faced assertion. Silence often signifies agreement. So binitarianism (the not-so-true flexible monotheism, more properly termed polytheism) is admittedly an **“organized family of God beings,”** a *plurality* of many gods. I

could rest my case, charging polytheism, on this citation alone before an objective jury. The person who penned this statement was being more honest than most practitioners of the binitarian-kind who will not publicly confess the truth of their system but rather redefine terms to suit their adopted practices.

Frankly, I have a problem with people who deliberately change definitions of common words to suit their distinctive religious doctrines. I have a problem with people who redefine terms like monotheism, stretching them to mean something different, even the opposite of what they were meant to depict. I have a problem with people who support multiple Gods and at the same time profess that there is only one God. I have a problem with people who deny what they really practice. The plain truth is that many binitarian persons, mostly from the outspoken self-anointed vocal party, twist monotheism into an unrecognizable state and steadfastly refuse to admit that they are practicing polytheism by supporting a minimum of two Gods now with millions more in the future. I call upon the deceived silent majority in the Armstrong camps to speak out against polytheistic binitarianism and tell their leaders that they want no more deception.

The binitarian leadership will not advertise the whole truth to the world, but rather will use their “human gods” idea couched in familial but deceptive terms so as to bypass the normal revulsion that rational people would experience if the truth of their polytheistic stance were exposed. The naked reality is that many of our binitarian friends have given themselves over to a foolish system of polytheism, one that if identified up front, would not be accepted by the majority of people they pursue as converts. I think the Armstrong system will, in the final analysis, become a stumbling block and many, as a result, will experience a great downfall. My heart cries out to the Armstrong camps to repent and change before it is too late. Let your voices be heard. Reject binitarian polytheism now!

Many in the Armstrong camp are deceived but many others are not. Deceived people do not know they are deceived until someone tells them they are deceived or until they suffer the consequences of their deception. And even then, they might not believe it or recognize the correction coming upon them.

Advocates of the binitarian system generally refuse to admit that their hearts are set upon becoming Gods themselves after the return of Christ when the Armstrong-variety of churches become the Kingdom of God with themselves as super-ruling Gods. After the resurrection of the saved, they, as binitarian believers, will be transformed into Gods in their own right, able to create life on their own; Gods as God is God. In addition, they say, they will be worshiped as Divine Gods. *Make no mistake: some have admitted this to me privately.* But this has to be the ultimate blasphemy. I cannot envision that Yahweh, the only true God of his Universe, would continue to wink at their activities much longer.

I believe that God stepped in and destroyed the old Sabbatarian Worldwide Church of God and scattered its members because of the corrupt practices that were ongoing in that organization. I believe that God resolved to eliminate all public influence of the Armstrong organization. I believe that the binitarian future is dim and that their movement is ultimately heading for disaster. Perhaps I am wrong but I don't think so. May Yahweh have mercy on us all.

— *F. Paul Haney*

Addendum

Certain objections to the true One-God monotheistic position keep coming up no matter how many times they are answered. A few examples of these assertions and brief responses follow in order to put a few of these things to rest. (There may be some overlap in the analysis.)

→ Mere Man: “One-God people say Jesus was a mere man.”

◆ Response: This is an outright lie come from a liar. It proves the one making the charge has not been reading our material. Jesus is a unique person who has been exalted to the right hand of God. He may be highly honored or even worshiped as the son of God, but not as God. To pray to Jesus seeking forgiveness, etc., is a mistake. He said go to the Father who is greater than himself (**Matt.6:5-9; Jn.10:29; 14:28**). Not even the righteousness of Christ made him able to justify man, but only God’s acceptance of Christ as the sacrificial lamb (his blood) made his sacrifice effectual.

→ Jesus Must Be God to Save: “Jesus had to be God to die and save mankind. The blood of even a perfect man cannot save any other man.”

◆ Response: This is foolishness. Yahweh saves man. Neither Jesus nor any other human saves man (**Jn.5:19, 30**). It is Yahweh who justifies. It is Yahweh God who determined the conditions for salvation (**Rom.5:6-11**). And it is Yahweh who *accepted the blood* of the *final* sacrifice, Yahshua (Jesus the Christ), and determined that it was sufficient and effectual for salvation. This ought to be plain to anyone who is paying attention or has read the Scriptures. Further, an eternal infinite God just cannot die under any circumstances. Jesus therefore was never eternal or if he was, he never died. Take your pick; there is no middle ground. The third “possibility” is that Jesus was *possessed* by an unearthly visitor who was separate from Jesus, called the “Christ” and who stepped aside while Jesus the man died. Not likely but a view held by some.

→ John Wrote That Jesus Was God: “John said that Jesus was the Word and the Word was made flesh as Jesus.”

◆ Response: John never wrote that. John (**Jn.1:1-14**) never stated that Jesus was God or with God. He wrote in his opening that the “logos,” or as translated the “word,” was with God, etc. In fact John wrote that Jesus was *not* God: God is spirit (**4:24**) but Jesus was a flesh and blood man; no one has seen God (**1:18**) but people saw Jesus; the Father is the only true God (**17:3**); God sent his son who then cannot be God (**3:17; 6:29**); Jesus is the *begotten* son (**3:16,18; 6:69**) and *beget* means to bring into being; the Father is identified as God (**6:46**); Jesus is “of” God but not God (**8:47**); the Father was Jesus’ God (**20:17**). The Bible never claims Jesus is (or was) God, only man makes this foolish claim for personal reasons, mostly.

→ Jesus Was a God/man While He Was on earth: Ref: **Jn.1:1-14; 17:22-24; Rom.8:32; Phil.2:5-9** [This is the 200 percent solution.]

◆ Response: David Feddes (*Back to God Hour*): **Manger Mystery**- “If Jesus were a God before coming to earth, and was a God/man while on earth, then the Father took no chances whatsoever in sending him down to earth to supposedly die for mankind. In the first place, the Father knew he would resurrect Jesus and in the second place, if Jesus were a God always, then he did not really die after all. Even Jesus, if he “put off” his “divine nature” or whatever, knew that the Father would resurrect him even if he did die. But Jesus as God could not die: God is immortal, God is eternal; God is infinite! ... Without the death of a sacrifice, true death, death with no expectation or certain knowledge of being resurrected, then the sacrifice was less than we have been led to believe.” [FPH: So far, he is correct! And God has to *accept* the sacrifice to make it worthwhile. The one being sacrificed cannot accept his *own* sacrifice.]

Continuing, David “answers” this puzzle according to his trinitarian view: “This divine Person called the Word joined himself to a human nature and become known to us as Jesus. The Word did not begin to exist when baby Jesus was born in the manger or when the baby was first conceived in Mary’s womb. In fact, this person called the Word was himself God, and it was this God, this divine Person, who entered this world as the baby Jesus.”

FPH: According to Feddes, perhaps the Word just changed his name after slipping into Mary’s womb. Was Jesus really possessed by an unearthly being called the Word and this other-worldly being that possessed baby Jesus turned him into a divine God? Or did the Word remain a God while Jesus remained a man and the man part died while the God part continued to live? Who/what died? Did Jesus suffer and die on the cross while the “Word” waited on the sidelines or went back to heaven?

The *200 percent solution* derives from the trinitarian/binitarian idea that Jesus was 100 percent God and 100 percent man (fully God and fully man), which is a nonsensical notion at best and a deception for sure. Nothing is or can be 200 percent in substance. We can only go to 100 percent. Any percent beyond that is smoke and mirrors.

→ Forgiveness: “Jesus forgave sins and this proves he was God because only God can forgive sins” (Matt.9:1-8).

◆ Response: This is only a half-truth. God is *ultimately* the only one who can forgive sins (Matt.6:14-15), yet God can delegate that ability to an intermediary as he pleases who may speak on God’s behalf. This reflects a standard law of agency. A State Governor can pardon (forgive) a prisoner only because he has “permission” to do so from the State itself, a greater entity than the Governor who only represents the law and the State to the citizenry, as an agent of the State. “**The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand**” (Jn.3:35; cf. Matt.28:18). “**I can of myself do nothing**” (Jn.5:30a).

→ Life in Himself: “His power over life and death was *due to* his complete deity.”

◆ Response: Wrong once more. His power over life and death was given to him from Yahweh, the Father in heaven. Only God has life in himself but he did give this ability to Yahshua (Jesus). “**For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man**” (Jn.5:26-27). The executing of judgment includes forgiveness of sin, according to his personal evaluation as an agent of God.

→ God With Us: “The Bible says that Jesus is ‘God with us’ so he must be God.”

◆ Response: A half truth. The name Immanuel, like many Hebrew names, has a meaning of “God with us.” “Bethel” means a house of God. “Daniel” means a judge of God. “Eldad” means God has loved while Elda’ah” means God of knowledge. Eldaah is a son of Midian, so if names mean things, then Eldaah was a God of knowledge. “Immanuel” does *not* mean “God came down from heaven and lived with us.” Besides, Jesus was never named “Immanuel.” In what sense is God with us?

→ Only God Can Perform Miracles: “Jesus healed people and raised the dead.”

◆ Response: Not so. Many others healed people and Elisha’s bones even raised a dead man (2Ki.13:20-21). “**And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons**” (Matt.10:7-8; cf. Mk.16:16-17).

→ Only God Could Walk on Water: “Jesus walked on water, which proved that he was actually God.”

◆ Response: Simply reading the passage will prove that not only did Jesus walk on top of the water, but so did Peter! But, alas, Peter lost faith and started to sink. “**And**

when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus” (Matt.14:29b). Peter must have been a lesser God.

→The Death of a God: “What makes Jesus' death of infinite value is not merely his sinlessness, but the fact that he was God manifest in the flesh. If Jesus was not metaphysically God himself, then his death could not save us. The infinite God became a man to die for us.”

◆ Response: First, the death of Christ does not save anyone: we are *reconciled to Yahweh God* through Jesus' death and saved by his *life*, his blood, his resurrection, by God (**Rom.5:10**). Like all sacrifices, it was the acceptance of the sacrifice that made Jesus' blood efficacious. The life is in the blood. Jesus had to be a man to even die! Second, Jesus was not *metaphysically God*. Metaphysical means: beyond the physical or material; being supernatural (beyond natural) or transcendental. Jesus was begotten of God; his life *began* at that point of conception. Beget pictures a beginning. Third, an *infinite* being cannot become *finite*. God cannot simply stop being God and become a man. He can appear as a man. The term “infinite” means without beginning or ending. This objection is ridiculous and smacks of superstition and mythology.

→The Death of One Man Cannot Save Others: “If God only indwelt a particular man, then at best, Jesus' sacrifice could only have accomplished a particular salvation, i.e. his own. His death could not have saved all of humanity. It is by virtue that God became a man, identifying with the human race as a whole, that Jesus can be a mediator between God and men. This is the reason for the efficacy of Calvary. If the humanity of Christ was separate from his deity, however, this could not be true.”

◆ Response: This objection is similar to the previous two. First, Yahweh can establish whatever standards he wants as to the efficacy of any given sacrifice. He did it in the OT. To dictate to God what he may or may not accept is foolish. Second, God did not “become” a man. God, in some fashion was “manifested” in the flesh (**1Tim.3:16**). Jesus “came” in the flesh (**1Jn.4:3**). The Son of God was “manifested” in the flesh (**1Jn.3:8**). Manifest means made visible, discernable. It does *not* mean “appeared” as in a theophany or materialization of a heavenly being come to earth. How did God become discernable in Jesus? Did God just materialize himself on earth? No. Jesus was the personification (and more) of God and his attributes.

→Jesus came down from heaven: “Jesus knew he had come down from heaven and plainly said so” (**Jn.6:38**).

◆ Response: Jesus said in context that he was the “living bread” that came down from heaven. This means, as an idiom, essentially that he “came from God” or that he was “sent” from God. All these terms are interchangeable in this context and sense. Jesus said he was the “bread of life.” (He also said that believers should “eat” his flesh and “drink” his blood.) We know that Jesus actually never came down from heaven, unless it was just after his resurrection as some teach, and that he was not a loaf of bread. Regardless, Jesus or Yahshua began life in the womb of Mary—his genealogy proves this (**Matt.1:1ff**). Manna came down from heaven, but in what sense? It was a physical thing and physical things are earthly, not heavenly. Fire came down from heaven. Actually, God sent the fire. Hailstones came down from heaven (**Josh.10:11**). God sent hailstones, but hail is a component of stormy weather, normally, and thus not heavenly (as in God's throne position-wise) but earthly, physical. To answer the objection, God can send a person, as an ambassador, at the same time that person resides on earth and he will be sent “from heaven.” He has done it. Take Jonas, for instance. God sent him to Nineveh and God's order to go came from heaven. #

