

The Foundations of Life, Part 6

The God of The Bible

Mankind has always tried to define God in the best way they can. Trying to emphasize exactly how they believe God has revealed himself from Creation to today. However, because of our limited ability to easily convey the conceptual teaching of the Godhead. History is laced with different points of views, and Creeds to make and or define the Godhead the best it can be conceived in the minds of men.

Whether its the Athanasian Creed, or the Creed of Chalcedon in 451 A. D or the statements of other counsels called by Rome or Constantinople. We have always tried to best define God in a personal way we can comprehend. The divisions caused by these attempts and the the debates that followed have seen the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church split as well as others. As each and everyone desires to have the most orthodox statement of faith.

However, God is a Spirit and He has chosen to reveal himself as Father in Creation, Son in Redemption and Holy Spirit in emanation. Choosing to do so in this equivalent fashion with seemingly dual distinctions is quite difficult for us to put into our little box of philosophical thinking. For instance, the Father is the God of Creation, the only apparent deity in early Genesis passages. Notwithstanding, lurking in the scriptures are passages given to Jesus and are substantiated in the Gospels mentioning Him as the Word who spoke all into existence. This passage is one of hundreds of dual equivalent meanings throughout the Bible.

Here are the main three schools of thought on Godhead. One, and which is the traditional and considered orthodox teaching of the Church is the Trinity. This means there are three persons in one God, not three Gods. The persons are known as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and they have all always existed as three separate persons. The person of the Father is not the same person as the Son. The person of the Son is not the same person as the Holy Spirit. The person of the Holy Spirit is not the same person as the Father. If you take away any one, there is no God. God has always been a trinity from all eternity: 'From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God " (Ps. 90:2). Persons as described has become the term used by much of the Church. However, offices and essences have also been used to describe the titles of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Confusion comes because in our natural man we can't seem to come to grips with One God in three persons, without thinking of separation and a or separate God's. Don't let this totally through you off. You must understand that the early Church Fathers were best trying to define the Godhead and choose the words " person " as what they thought would relate with clarity the true tenor of the Doctrine.

Oneness Christians believe that all the fullness of the Godhead dwelled within Jesus (Colossians 2:9). With Christ statement that, " if you've seen me you've seen the Father" . The concept comes from the belief that " God is a Spirit " and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and Truth ". Good biblical tenet. The weakness of the doctrine does come somewhat unglued though, when you consider the terminology of Scripture. Especially when it comes to Jesus and His relating to the Father and making statements like, " I go to the Father " or " Pray to the Father " (Matthew 6:6 NIV). The language so often used by our Lord also talks about himself having to leave so He could send the Holy Spirit (John 15:26). The concept of wanting to explain the Oneness of God correctly is good. However, you can't ignore the way the scriptures read in its connection with the dialog of our Lord. Jesus is not a deceiver! Why would he say I go to the Father and there is no true " Father ", or why would he say I will send the " Holy Spirit " if there is none. I believe the Oneness people whom I have fellowshiped with are truly trying to be correct biblically. Yet, you don't want to have to go through hoops to prove a doctrine and ignore the common dialog of the scriptures. God's revelation of Father, Son and Holy Ghost develops as a theme throughout the Bible, it can't just be swept away and put in a closet because it doesn't fit with someone's particular biblical presumption.

Now I believe there is a way to relate the fact of God's Spirit filling Christ and the Holy Spirit being the extension, so you could try to say that He was the Fullness of God in that sense. For He was God in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity. Nevertheless, we must be careful not to manipulate scripture and take it away from its context to prove our doctrines.

Dualism was another prominent doctrine in the early days of the Church, as the Holy Spirit was seen as no more than the Spirit of God, not separate in its relation to man from God the Father. However, the Holy Spirit is seen busily at work in the Book of Acts, and is always lifting up or exalting the name of Jesus. It was the promise of the Father and the Son. Dualism was a popular train of thought by various groups in the early Church, but never was able to become a mainstream doctrine. Finding itself especially on the outside looking in at the Counsel of Nicea in 325 A.D..

The God of the Bible In Relation to Man.

Genesis 41:38

38Pharaoh said to his servants, 'Can we find anyone else like this— one in whom is the spirit of God?'

John 4:24

24God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.'

God's Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God is at work in the hearts and lives of men and woman everywhere. Here in these two particular passages it relates of the witness of God's Spirit to those whom did not know the Lord, then in the following passage testifies that God is Spirit and our worship relates to the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

God has a dual purpose in His relation with Creation. One, to manifest His Work so that the world might know him (healings, miracles and signs and wonders) through His various methods of manifestation. Two, He wants to reflect His nature and love through the Spirit of God through His believers expressing the fruits of the Spirit. Whether manifestation or reflection, it is the Lord's intention to express the work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in a personal way throughout His Creation.

The Character of God Communicated To Us.

Father God

I read about a small boy who was consistently late coming home from school. His parents warned him one day that he must be home on time that afternoon, but nevertheless he arrived later than ever. His mother met him at the door and said nothing. At dinner that night, the boy looked at his plate. There was a slice of bread and a glass of water. He looked at his father's full plate and then at his father, but his father remained silent. The boy was crushed.

The father waited for the full impact to sink in, then quietly took the boy's plate and placed it in front of himself. He took his own plate of meat and potatoes, put it in front of the boy, and smiled at his son. When that boy grew to be a man, he said, 'All my life I've known what God is like by what my father did that night.'" *J. Allan Peterson*

The Godhead expresses or communicates its character to us in many ways. Relating the care God has for His creation, and His willingness to work with us, despite our difficulties our inconsistencies. The reason being simply is He loves us, and is a God who abides by His Covenant. His

contract of love with His Creation is one that He is serious about.

Remember this, " God is more concerned about our character than our comfort. His goal is not to pamper us physically but to perfect us spiritually. - Paul W. Powell

Now does He want you to have abundant life, and or good success. He sure enough does, but he knows without the foundation of character it's house that will fall. He wants you to stand the test of time and run your spiritual race with confidence of His redeeming love.

Matthew 5:48

48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

God wants us to take upon His Character. Just as all of God's fullness was in Christ and he exemplified the character of God in all he undertook. He did it not through His humanities might, but through the Spirit of God that dwelt in Him. The Holy Spirit empowered the Son of Man assisting him to handle the desires and difficulties of the flesh. Christ was the Son of God, but no doubt in coming down to earth and taking upon our humanity he had to deal with a nature totally contrary to what He was akin to.

God With Us and In Us.

The Greek word for lord is indeed used in scripture in the sense of master, and as a mere honorary title as in the English Sir. But, on the other hand, it is the translation of Adonai, supreme Lord, an incommunicable name of God, and the substitute for Jehovah, a name the Jews would not pronounce. It is in this sense that Christ is 'the Lord, the Lord of Lords, the Lord God'; Lord in that sense in which God alone can be Lord, having a dominion of which divine perfection is the only adequate or possible foundation. This is the reason why no one can call him Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. It is a confession which implies the apprehension of the glory of God as it shines in Him. It is an acknowledgment that He is God manifested in the flesh. Blessed are all who make this acknowledgment with sincerity; for flesh and blood cannot reveal the truth therein confessed, but only the Father who is in heaven. *Charles Hodge, Source unknown*

With a fresh understanding of who God is, and clear faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Our God who came down to be with us and now in us through the work of the Holy Spirit. Can anoint us to exhibit His Grace to to this generation in understanding and power.

Matthew 1:23

23 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.'

Luke 4:1

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness,

We must be equipped with His fullness and follow His leading to be able to live victoriously over Satan just like He. In Luke 4:1 the Greek word used to relate the statement " being full of the Holy Ghost " (KJV) is transliterated "Pleres". The definition of this word is; to be thoroughly permeated with and or complete, lacking nothing. Now that is pretty awesome! Yet, that is how Christ wants us to be. As he wants to be our " all in all ". Having permeating throughout the core of our being His

presence, His nature, His character. For if God's fullness is abiding in us the enemy of our soul has no chance of getting us off course, and or being distracted by the cares of this life.

All this being said it takes discipline just like it did the Christ. To harness this body not under the yoke of bondage, but unto the leadership of the Holy Spirit. We must decrease, that He might increase. This takes a consistent and dedicated prayer life, good mentoring and feeding off the Word of God. Putting on the mind of Christ and not letting the mindset of defeatism that is in this world to tear away at the Hope that lies within you through faith in Jesus Christ.

The great Evangelist D.L Moody understood so well what it meant to be full of the Holy Spirit of God when he said, " I believe firmly that the moment our hearts are emptied of pride and selfishness and ambition and everything that is contrary to God's law, the Holy Spirit will fill every corner of our hearts. But if we are full of pride and conceit and ambition and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God. We must be emptied before we can be filled."

Conclusion

A Personal Revelation of the Godhead in our lives is far greater than a static doctrinal equation concisely understood in the hearts of men. We must be determined not to cheapen this awesome God and his personal covenant with us to just a formal understanding of His Church and Covenant. Instead, we need to be determined to " know Him " and the power of His Resurrection. That way our Lord never becomes an invisible God who might be out there, but rather the awesome God who lives inside you and me today.

The Church has spent so much time on trying to get the right verbiage concerning the theology of the Godhead. Yet, has not spent enough time getting to know the God behind the Godhead. That living and moving Spirit whose grace is available to all whom would but choose " To Believe ".