

Introduction to Cults

Oneness Pentecostal's Movement

VS

UNDERSTANDING THE

DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

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Course 2



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Understanding the Doctrine of the Trinity

Since God is a triune being, theologians use the word Trinity to represent the complex doctrine through which man comprehends His existence.

Since the word Trinity is not found anywhere in the received text or in its offspring (the Authorized Version and other biblical translations derived from the received text), many argue that the doctrine of the Trinity is not a Biblical one.

However, when a person comes to understand the theory that is embodied in the terminology they cannot help but find proof of the Trinity throughout the Bible.

The doctrine of the Trinity is believed by all Christian groups. Some groups profess to be Christian and do not believe in the Trinity, however, none of these groups are truly Christian because their various perversions of the gospel cause them to have, "a form of godliness but denying the power thereof" (II Timothy 3:5).

The Bible went on to say we should have nothing to do with them.

Why? Because they are not Christians. This does not mean we cannot love them and share the gospel with them, it simply means we are not to fellowship with them as brothers in Christ.

The concept of the Trinity is the very concept of the existence of God, and since God reveals himself to His children, it only makes sense that all Christian churches would believe in and defend the doctrine of the Trinity.

Since the word Trinity is used to represent God as a triune being, what is triune? Noah Webster defined the word triune to mean, "three in one."

This means that God, a singular being, exists in a plural manner. This is why the term Godhead is often used in scripture (Acts 7:19, Romans 1:20, Colossians 2:9, etc.).

God's very name implies His triune existence. The Hebrew name for God used in all known manuscripts is ELOHIM, so Genesis 1:1 could read, "In the beginning ELOHIM created the heaven and the earth." The word ELOHIM means three in one.

The word ELOHIM has both a singular and a plural usage in Hebrew, uniquely, the two usages are always simultaneous.

The word ELOHIM can never be used in the plural form without implying the singular and vice-versa.

Note also, that all Hebrew letters have a numeric value, all Hebrew words also have value. ELOHIM is an interesting word in that it has two values, three and one.

The Trinity Illustrated in Nature

It is no wonder that when God, ELOHIM, said in Genesis 1:26, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," that He then created man to be a triune being.

Just as God is composed of three, so is man. Man is composed of:

1. a body,
2. a soul,
3. and a spirit. We all know man to be one being, not three, in spite of his triune composition.

The body is separate from the soul which is separate from the spirit, however they still make one man.

Man was only one of God's many creations. God is the creator of the entire universe. Just as God created man in His own image, he had also created the universe in the same fashion.

The building block of the universe is the atom. Any object in the universe when broken down to it's smallest form has been discovered to be nothing more than a complexly designed series of atoms.

1. The atom(*the smallest particle of a chemical element that can exist.*) is a triune object.

2. It is composed of protons(*a stable subatomic particle occurring in all atomic nuclei, with a positive electric charge equal in magnitude to that of an electron.*)
3. neutrons(*a subatomic particle of about the same mass as a proton but without an electric charge, present in all atomic nuclei except those of ordinary hydrogen.*),
4. and electrons(*a stable subatomic particle with a charge of negative electricity, found in all atoms and acting as the primary carrier of electricity in solids).*)

Each part of the atom is independent of the other two, yet it remains only one object, a proton can not exist without an accompanying neutron and electron and vice-versa.

We understand ourselves, how we exist. Through science we are learning of our environment and how the things around us exist.

So man has always understood the concept of the Trinity, and this understanding is what helps us to understand the existence of God.

The Trinity Illustrated in the Bible

The concept of God being triune can be illustrated in the Bible just as easily as it can be illustrated in nature.

John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This shows God to exist in two forms.

The word God in this passage refers to ELOHIM, or to God as a whole. The word Word refers to God the Son, who is Jesus Christ.

This is shown in verse fourteen, "and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory...as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Having established that God is a singular being with a plural existence, and understanding that the term "Word" (capitalized to represent deity) in John chapter one refers to God the Son who is the Lord Jesus Christ, let us read I John 5:7,

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, The Father, The Word, and The Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

Thus we have proof: His name ELOHIM (meaning three in one) is proof, the design of nature is proof, and in scripture there is proof.

God is a triune being composed of God the Father, God the Word or God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost who is often referred to as the Holy Spirit.

They are each independently divine, they are each a separate aspect to the overall personality of God, yet they are combined to make one singular being.

How The Members of the Trinity Function

The members of the Trinity work together in complete unity, totally dependent and yet totally interdependence of each other.

1. God the Father is the sovereign ruler of the entire universe, everything operates because of and to fulfill his eternal plan.
2. God the Son takes this plan out of eternity and brings it into time, administering the various aspects of the plan.
3. God the Holy Spirit makes this eternal plan, the will of God, real to men. These functions can be illustrated many times in the Bible.

The Function of the Members of the Trinity in Creation

In his omnipotence,

1. God the Father had already created the universe somewhere in eternity past before the existence of time as we know it.

Even though the universe did not physically exist in time, it did in eternity (remember, eternity has no concept of time).

God knew He would create everything, and in eternity already had (our future is already God's past).

The theory of omnipotence and God's eternal existence could not be adequately understood if I were to write a million pages on the subject, so I will not.

It will be left to the reader to research the subject of God's omnipotence and eternal existence independently of this paper (it is of course assumed that all who read this work will already possess adequate understanding of these concepts).

Let us just summarily say that God the father had willed and fulfilled creation somewhere in eternity past.

This is why Genesis 1:1 says, "In the Beginning (present tense) God created (past tense) the heaven and the earth." God was doing in time what He had already done in eternity.

2. God the Son brought creation into time. The creation had been the will of God for all eternity, all that was needed to bring that eternal reality into the reality of time was the spoken word.

John chapter one teaches that God the son is the Word, and verse three says, "all things were made by him", meaning the Word who is God the Son.

The word was given in Genesis 1:3, "and God said" This spoken word of God the Son introduced the Father's eternal plan to time.

3. The Holy Spirit was waiting upon the face of the earth to fulfill the Word, this is found in Genesis 1:2. As soon as Jesus spoke the word, the Spirit fulfilled the word, making it real to man.

The Function of the Members of the Trinity in the Old Testament

Just as in creation, it is God the Father who has sovereignly determined the course of the universe in eternity, God the Son who as the Word brings the will of God into time, and it is the Holy Spirit who makes God's will real to man.

In God the Father's perspective, Noah had built the Ark before ever the earth was formed, so also had Moses and the Children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, etc.

This is why God in Genesis 3:15 was able to offer salvation to Adam, He knew in eternity past that Man would sin and that Jesus would be the atonement for sin (read Revelation 13:8) so Adam placing his (present tense) faith in Christ's future act that, God had known about before the fact, resulted in salvation.

Why? Because God knew it would happen so it was as good as done.

It was God the Son who brought the will of God into time. Throughout the Old Testament we read: "The Word of the Lord came unto Abram." (Genesis 15:1), "according to the Word of the Lord, as the Lord commanded Moses" (Numbers 3:51),

"The Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the Word of the Lord." (I Samuel 3:21), "The Word of the Lord came unto Nathan" (II Samuel 7:4), "The Word of the Lord came unto Solomon" (I Kings 6:11), etc., etc., etc.

It was then the Holy Spirit who enabled these men to fulfill the Word which God the Son had given them.

A good illustration is the story of Samson. Judges 14:6 says, "and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him." Thus, the will of the Father revealed by the Word of the Son was made real to Samson when the Holy Spirit empowered him to fulfill it.

In the Old Testament era, the Holy Spirit did not continually abide with the believer as He does now.

Instead, the Spirit came upon a man in order that he may be empowered to do God's will, then the Spirit would leave when the work was completed or when the man sinned.

This is why we read that Samson, "Wist not that the Lord had departed from him" in Judges 16:20. This is also the reason King David prayed, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me" in Psalms 51:11.

The Function of the Members of the Trinity in the New Testament

The primary activity of God in the New Testament was to provide for man's redemption and establish Local Churches to replace Israel as God's

ambassadors to the world. (Israel is still God's chosen nation, they still enjoy the privileges of being God's chosen.)

Unfortunately, Israel failed in its task in two ways, the first was in rejecting the Messiah and the second has been in failing to lead gentiles to the Messiah.

The creation of the church does not infringe upon God's promises to Israel as some Christians believe, it was however God's way to in grace bestow upon us unworthy gentiles the blessing, i.e.

the blessing of preaching the gospel and seeing people saved, after Israel choose not to take advantage of the opportunity.)

God the Father, knowing man would one day sin, had established redemption in eternity past.

This is why Revelation 13:8 says that Christ was, "slain before the foundation of the world." This is once again how He was able to justify Adam in the garden, and this is how the Old Testament saints were saved.

Jesus brought the plan into time when He fulfilled His work on the cross (John chapters 19 and beyond).

The Holy Spirit makes redemption real to men as He reveals the gospel to their soul and quickens their previously dead spirit (I Peter 3:18).

God had also established the Church in eternity past, just as He has established His entire work. The Son brought the Church into time when He spoke the words, "Upon this rock I will build my Church" in Matthew 16:18.

The Holy Spirit has made God's will real to men by empowering them with special gifts to fulfill the work of the Church (read I Corinthians chapters twelve through fourteen).

The Function of the Members of the Trinity Today

1. God the Father is the Sovereign ruler over all the affairs of the universe. He is the true standard of Holiness and the judge of all that is.

2. God the Son is the Savior, the one through whom all men may receive justification before God. Jesus also acts as an advocate to the Father on behalf of the believer.

"There is...one mediator...Christ Jesus", I Timothy 2:5. Charles Wesley best defined the present day role and relationship of God the Father and God the Son when he penned the classic hymn, Arise My Soul Arise:

Arise my soul, arise!
Shake off thy guilty fear's;
The bleeding sacrifice in my behalf appears;
Before the throne my surety stands
My name is written on His hands.

He ever lives above,
for me to intercede;
His all redeeming love,
His precious blood to plead:
His blood atoned for all our race,
and sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly plead for me:
"Forgive him, O forgive," they cry,
"Nor let that ransomed sinner die!"

The Father hears Him pray,
His dear anointed one;
He can not turn away
The presence of His Son:
His Spirit answers to the Blood,
and tells me I am born of God.
My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for His child,
I can no longer fear:
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And "Father, Abba, Father!" cry.

3. The Holy Spirit is currently engaged in the work of enabling believers to fulfil the work of the Church (I Corinthians 12-14), empowering men to preach the gospel (Acts 1:8),

quickenning the spirit of repentant sinners (I Peter 3:18, I Corinthians 2:10), keeping the believer secure in Christ until the Second Coming (i.e. the eternal security of the believer, Ephesians 1:12-14),

comforting the believer (John 14-15), being the very essence of Christ indwelling the believer (John 14:16-18), and finally, the Spirit never forsakes the believer (I Corinthians 6:15-20).

The Modern Day Work of the Members of the Trinity in Prayer

Prayer is the primary expression of the relationship between God and the saved man, so it is to be given it's own sub-heading.

1. God the Father answers all of our prayers, hence we are taught to pray to, "Our Father which art in Heaven" (Matthew 6:9).
2. He answers our prayers on behalf of, or because of our relationship with His Son, hence we pray in Jesus name. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you" (John 16:23).
3. And we pray through the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 26:41) revealing our needs to the Father with the help of the Spirit, "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." (Acts 8:26-27). The Holy Spirit could correctly be referred to as our prayer partner.

Conclusion

The proof of God's triune existence has been plainly presented along with the mechanics of the doctrine of the Trinity emphasizing God's relationship to His creation (primarily man).

Unfortunately this does not even begin to expound on the deep truths of God. Multiplied volumes have attempted such an undertaking, however, the subject is so deep that all attempts will fail in revealing all of it's depths.

It will not be until we get to heaven and we finally see God face to face that we will comprehend the subject in it's entirety.

Perhaps the best definition which man has given for the Trinity is found in the writings of Dr. John F. Walvoord, the president of Dallas Theological Seminary:

God is one numerically, He subsists in three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit who are equal in eternity, power and glory, each possessing all the divine attributes and yet having properties which distinguish them within the unity of the Trinity.

THE ABC'S OF SALVATION



ADMIT:

Admit that you are a sinner and have made mistakes.



BELIEVE:

Believe that Jesus is God's only Son and He chose to die on a cross for you.



COMMIT:

Commit yourself to a life of following Jesus and serving others.

What are the beliefs of Jesus only / oneness Pentecostals?

1 ... The "Jesus Only" movement, also known as Oneness Pentecostalism or oneness theology, teaches that there is only one God, but denies the tri-unity of God.

2 ...In other words, oneness theology does not recognize the distinct persons of the Godhead:

3 ...Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It has various forms / modes / manifestations—some see Jesus Christ as the one God, who sometimes manifests Himself as the Father or the Holy Spirit.

4 ...The core doctrine of Oneness Pentecostal / Jesus Only is that Jesus is the Father and Jesus is the Spirit. There is one God who reveals Himself in different "modes."

5 ...This teaching of the Jesus Only / Oneness Pentecostals has been around for centuries, in one form or another, as modalism.

6...Modalism teaches that God operated in different forms or modes at different times—sometimes as the Father, sometimes as the Son, and sometimes as the Holy Spirit.

7.. But passages like Matthew 3:16-17, where two or all three Persons of the Godhead are present, contradict the modalistic view. Modalism was condemned as heretical as early as the second century A.D.

8...The early church strongly contended against the view that God is strictly a singular person who acted in different forms at different times.

They argued from Scripture that the tri-unity of God is evident in that more than one Person of the Godhead is often seen simultaneously, and they often interact with one another (examples: Genesis 1:26; 3:22;11:7; Psalm 2:7; 104:30; 110:1; Matthew 28:19; John 14:16).

A.....Oneness Pentecostalism / Jesus Only doctrine is unbiblical.

The concept of the tri-unity of God, on the other hand, is present throughout Scripture.

It is not a concept that is easily grasped by the finite mind. And because man likes everything to make sense in his theology, movements such as the Jesus Only movement—not to mention the Jehovah’s Witnesses—regularly arise to try to explain the nature of God.

Of course, this simply cannot be done without doing violence to the biblical text. Christians have come to accept that God’s nature is not subject to the limitations we might like to put on Him.

We simply believe Him when He says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. '

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9). If we can’t understand His thoughts and ways, we accept that we cannot fully understand His nature, either.

B.....What is United Pentecostal

1 United Pentecostal Church is a Oneness Pentecostal denomination that was formed in 1945 when the Pentecostal Church Incorporated and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus Christ merged.

Their website says that they “grew from 521 churches in 1945” to “4,243 churches and daughter works in 2010.”

2The United Pentecostal Church claims to be “among the fastest growing church organizations since it was formed in 1945.”

3Because United Pentecostal Churches are normally congregational in government, there can be some differences among individual churches.

As a self-governing church body, each congregation elects its own pastors and leaders. The denomination's headquarters is in Hazelwood, Missouri.

4....The roots of the United Pentecostal Church and what is known as "Oneness Pentecostalism" can be traced back to the early days of the Pentecostal Movement, which began in the early 1900s in Topeka, Kansas, based on the teachings of Charles Parham.

5...In 1906 the Pentecostal Movement gained popularity during the Azusa Street Revival led by William Seymour. While it was rejected by mainline Christian denominations, the movement continued to grow and its followers began to form their own Pentecostal organizations or denominations.

One of the first was the Assemblies of God, which was formed around 1914.

6..The teaching that became the basis for Oneness Pentecostalism can be traced back to a Pentecostal camp meeting held in Arroyo Seco, California, either in late 1913 or early 1914.

7.. While at the meeting, a Pentecostal pastor named John Scheppe had what he believed was a divine revelation from God.

8...As he meditated that night, he believed God revealed to him that baptism must be done in the "name of Jesus only" and not in the name of "the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

9...Like most cult leaders, his revelation and "new doctrine" did not come as the result of the careful study of Scripture but instead was based on a subjective revelation he believed to be from God.

10 ...Soon after, several other Assembly of God pastors began teaching this "new revelation" that would become the basis for Oneness Pentecostalism and "Jesus name only baptism."

11...As the new "movement" gained followers, it caused a division in the

newly formed Assembly of God organization.

12. ..Recognizing the unbiblical nature of this teaching, the Assemblies of God rejected this unbiblical doctrine and affirmed the biblical doctrine of the Trinity at its Fourth General Council in October 1916.

13. ..This led to the Assembly of God banning approximately 150 pastors from the denomination, those who had been teaching this unbiblical doctrine.

14. ..A few months later several Oneness Pentecostal pastors met in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, and started their own organization known as the General Assembly of the Apostolic Assemblies.

15. ..That was the beginning of the Oneness Pentecostal movement and eventually in 1945 two of the many Oneness Pentecostal organizations merged to form the United Pentecostal Church.

16. ..Often referred to as “Oneness Pentecostals” because of their denial of the triune nature of God, the denomination was formed around a heretical teaching known as modalism.

17.... Because they deny the true nature of God as revealed in Scripture and embrace other unbiblical teachings, this group is best classified as a cult rather than a true Christian denomination.

18 Like other cults such as Mormonism and Jehovah Witnesses, this form of extreme Pentecostalism denies the true nature of God and in reality preaches a different gospel than true biblical Christianity.

19 ...Claiming to teach “the apostles’ doctrine,” the teaching and doctrine of the United Pentecostal Church is based on poor exegesis of Scripture and the misreading and misinterpretation of certain Bible passages.

20... This forms the basis for their heretical teaching on the nature of God and the doctrine of salvation.

The heresies taught by this group include the denial of the triune nature of God as revealed in Scripture, as well as the teaching that one must be “baptized in Jesus’ name” to be saved and that true salvation is evidenced by speaking in tongues.

These teachings come from a long history of misreading Scripture.

While many false teachings have arisen out of the Pentecostal movement, Oneness Pentecostalism is certainly one of the most deceptive and heretical.

Rather than embrace the triune nature of God as revealed in Scripture, Oneness Pentecostals, such as the United Pentecostal Church, create for themselves a God they can “understand” and in doing so end up with another gospel and a heretical concept of God.

They hold to a form of modalism that, while correctly asserting the biblical truth that there is only one true God (Deuteronomy 6:4), fails to recognize the plurality of the Godhead (Genesis 1:26; Matthew 28:19–20; Mark 1:9–11; John 1:1; John 8:17–18; John 14:16; John 15:26; John 16:13–15; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2; Revelation 1:4–6).

21. ...Modalism is basically the teaching that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are simply different ways God manifests or reveals Himself to humanity.

22. ...It fails to recognize the distinctions that clearly exist between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, as well as their eternal relationship that Scripture reveals to us.

23. ...Contrary to John 1:1, Oneness doctrine denies the pre-existence of Jesus Christ despite the fact that this verse clearly teaches that Jesus is God and that He was with God, and was God from the beginning.

24. ... They acknowledge that Christ is God but ignore the part of this verse that clearly establishes the pre-existence of Christ and makes a clear distinction between Christ and the Father as do many other verses of

Scripture.

25 Their false view of God's nature then leads them to misunderstand what it means to be "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38).

26 ... The result is that they make water baptism "in the name of Jesus" a requirement of salvation and thus teach baptismal regeneration.

27..They also add to that troublesome teaching that one must be baptized a specific way using a specific formula or wording in order to be saved.

28 ... By adding to the gospel these requirements, as well as the false teaching that speaking in tongues is the evidence that one is saved, they end up with a convoluted gospel full of error and based on a misunderstanding of what Scripture really teaches.

29 ... The United Pentecostal Church recognizes that its teachings are not in line with most Christian denominations.

We know that because they state on their website that "in our day, the Apostolic Pentecostal movement is distinctive for its teaching of the Oneness of God, the New Testament plan of salvation, and aspects of practical holiness."

30... In other words, like other cults the leaders of this movement are fully aware that what they teach is not in line with what is normally referred to as orthodox or biblical Christian doctrine.

31 .. Still another troubling teaching of the United Pentecostal Church is their concept of holiness and the legalistic standards they impose on people.

For example, their view of holiness means

1..that women cannot wear jewelry or make-up, that women must let their hair grow long,

2..and that men must have their hair "noticeably short."

3...Also school students are forbidden from participating in shows, dances, dance classes, and theatre—and even prohibited from wearing gymnasium clothes.

4...While Christians are called to be holy, the United Pentecostal Church's definition of what is holy, like its other erroneous teaching comes from a misunderstanding of the basic principles of biblical hermeneutics.

5..The UPC's statement of faith makes it clear that there are areas where their beliefs are acceptable and orthodox in that they do agree with the teaching of Scriptures.

6...However, they go astray in very fundamental and essential areas.

7...They essentially deny justification by faith.

8...They add baptism and speaking in tongues as requirements for salvation.

9...For baptism to be effective it must be done using the phrase "In the name of Jesus" and must be administered by an ordained Oneness Pentecostal minister.

10..This essentially means that only those who embrace Oneness doctrines and practices will go to heaven, again another typical teaching of this type of "Christian" cult.

Like most cults, the United Pentecostal Church believes they are restoring biblical doctrine and biblical teaching that had been lost due to the corruption of the church throughout the centuries.

Rather than recognizing that God in His sovereignty has preserved the true "apostolic doctrine" throughout the history of the church, they believe they are restoring biblical truths. The fact is all they are doing is reviving the ancient heresy of modalism that has been rejected by Christians every time another "new" group of false teachers begins to proclaim it.