

**GOD**  
In The Hands Of  
Angry Sinners!

Anti-Christian Cults and Movements -  
Their View Of God In Contrast To The Bible.

**DEAN. A. EATON**

# Table of Contents

## Introduction Page

\* Aims and definitions

\* What is an anti-Christian Cult or Movement ?..... 1.

## God in the Hands of Angry Sinners.

### Part 1. - Making God In Our image !

a). The Mormon's - " god's many and lord's many" ..... 4.

b). The Jehovah's Witnesses - God as viewed from ' the watchtower.' ..... 26.

### Part 2. - God The Cosmic Chameleon ?

a). The New Age is here ?..... 56.

b) Astrology, Quija Boards, Spiritism, and U.F.O.'s..... 63.

c) A summary of New Age substitutes for God..... 80.

## God in the Hands of Redeemed Sinners.

### Part 1. - God's Self Revelation To Man in History.

a) The doctrine of the Trinity in Church history..... 85.

b) Calvin's mystery of the Trinity..... 96.

c) Calvin's contribution to Trinitarian thought..... 108.

d) The Reformers influence upon the contemporary Church's view of the Trinity..... 112.

e) e) The recovery of Trinitarian Theology in the 20th Century - Karl Barth..... 114.

**Conclusion**..... 117.

Appendix - A - Calvin and the Institutes of the Christian Religion..... 120.

Appendix - B - A survey of doctrinal errors of the Trinity,  
& Athanasias Creed..... 123.

Appendix - C - Documentation to footnotes on Jehovahs Witnesses..... 125.

Appendix - D - Evangelizing the New Age Movement..... 129.

**Bibliography**..... 134.

# Introduction

The aim of this work is twofold,

1. To give a brief account of the beliefs and ideas of certain anti-Christian cults and movements active today in the Western world, paying particular attention to their doctrine of God.

This aim will be achieved by presenting firstly an overview of two modern anti-Christian cults, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the Jehovahs Witnesses, and secondly by presenting the various anti-Christian ideas and practices that come under the category of the New Age Movement, a movement which seeks to offer substitutes for the God of the Bible.

2. The second aim is to give a succinct overview of the development of the doctrine of the God in Church history, thereby presenting a window into the Christian Church's own struggle to develop a doctrine of God.

This aim will be achieved by focusing mainly upon the contribution of French Reformer John Calvin in his apologetic of the doctrine of the Trinity, an apologetic which stands in contrast to the anti-Christian views presented in this work.

The term 'cult' is employed herein to define a group of people with;

- 1) A common system of religious worship.
- 2) A devoted attachment to a person or principle, etc.,
- 3) A sect.

The term 'anti-Christian cult' will be used in this work to refer to individuals, groups, or movements who are either opponents of the biblical Christ or to those who have created a substitute for the biblical Christ. The name 'anti-Christ' (Gk. anti-christos) was coined by the Apostle John and is found only in his letters (I Jn. 2:18,22; 4:3; 2 Jn:7). The term is rooted in ancient biblical prophecies concerning an evil person who will

2. appear at history's end to rally mankind against God. John also speaks of "many antichrists" and of a spirit of antichrist which is to be active even before the end times (1 John 2:18; 4:3). These false teachers can be recognised by their denial of Jesus as God in the flesh. John says that such people are "deceivers" who may even masquerade as Christians, but whose true character is revealed by their refusal to affirm the full deity of Jesus Christ. They are essentially teachers who wish to replace the true Jesus with a false one. In much the same way, the Jehovah Witnesses today want to persuade us that Jesus is not God, or the Mormons would tell us that Jesus is one of many gods, and the New Age movement which redefines the term 'Christ' to mean the divine spark in us all. So the idea of an anti-Christ as put forward by John carries the dual notions of an opponent of Christ and or of a false Christ. The Mormons, the Jehovah Witnesses, and various New Age groups charge the Christian Church with having either an incorrect understanding of the Hypostasis (Gk. noun. in Christology employed to distinguish the divine and human **physeis**, 'natures') of Jesus, or a deficient knowledge regarding His pre-Incarnate state and the scope of his salvific work on earth. The charge in fact goes further to accuse the Christian Church of being without God altogether.

The Early Christians were charged by the Romans with being atheists (without God) because they refused to register their religion. To do so would have meant placing Jesus Christ alongside the pantheon of gods which represented the officially registered (religio illicita) religions in the Roman Empire. However, the Christians accused the Romans of being atheists for not worshipping Jesus Christ as God.

The word 'atheist' occurs only once in the Bible. It occurs in Ephesians 2 where Paul says "... you were Gentiles, you were pagans, you 3. were **without God** (Gk.atheos) and without hope in the world ". (Eph 2:1ff). The word translated "without God" is atheos (Gk, atheos- .a-not+theos-god) . The evidence above supports the idea that in New Testament times an atheist was defined as someone who is without the living God, not someone who did not believe in God, the meaning given to this word in modern English. The Christian Church still faces the same accusation of being 'without god'. However, long before books existed in English, 'God ' was the English name for the Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There is according to James. I. Packer, "...a mainstream Christian view of God, which is Biblically based, which has been held since New Testament times and from which the other views have arisen by modification or reaction."<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> James Packer, An Introduction to the Christian Faith, p.85.,Lion Publishing, Lynx Communications,1992, England.

Jesus Christ and His Apostles taught a belief in God (Theism) and in only one God (Monotheism) who is the Triune Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This view stands in contrast to,

\* Pantheism which identifies God with everything, good, bad, and indifferent (e.g. as represented by some New Age groups).

\* Polytheism which sees any God as one among many (e.g. as seen in Mormonism).

\* Unitarianism which stresses the oneness of God and denies the divinity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit (e.g. as represented by the Jehovahs Witnesses).

This work will present an overview of the Christian Church's endeavours to articulate a doctrine of God consistent with Scripture and explore the deviations and alternatives to the doctrine of the Trinity offered by Mormons, Jehovahs Witnesses, and the New Age Movement.

# God in the Hands of Angry Sinners

## Part 1. - Making God in our image !

### a) The Mormons - "Gods Many and Lords Many"

#### 1. Historical Perspective

The Mormons, as they are commonly referred to, are divided into two major groups, both of which claim special revelation from God regarding the nature and character of God. This chapter will offer an account of the history and development of these special revelations and of the man who received them. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, with headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, (in 1996 boasting 9.7 million members), and The Reorganised Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints with headquarters in Independence, Missouri, ( in 1990 this group claimed almost 1 million members). The former currently are making progress in the Australia having grown from 41,423 members in 1981, to in excess of 92,000 members in 1996.<sup>2</sup>

#### i) Founder Joseph Smith Jr. - The 'visionary' leader !

Joseph Smith Jr., was born on December 23rd, 1805, in Sharon, Vermont, the third son of Joseph and Lucy Smith.<sup>3</sup> In 1817, when Joseph was 11, the family settled near Palmyra, New York. A few years later most of the members of the family had joined the Presbyterian church, but Joseph was undecided as to which church he should join. There was so much strife among the denominations, he felt, that he could not decide who was right and who was wrong. While puzzling about which church to join, Smith tells us, he read James 1:5,

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God ..." 5.

Accordingly, he continues, "I retired to the woods, knelt down, and began to pray. Suddenly two Personages appeared. One of them pointed to the other and said, 'This is my Beloved Son. Hear Him.' In answer to the question as to which of the "sects" was right, the one Personage who had addressed me, said that I was to join none of them, since they were all wrong, and since all their creeds were an abomination in his sight - that in fact, those professing their faith in these various sects were all corrupt and hypocritical."<sup>4</sup> This vision, Smith alleges, occurred in the early spring of 1820. It will be observed that Smith would then have been only 14 years old. What is quoted above is the official Mormon published version of the 'first vision' in which Joseph reportedly saw God the Father and God the Son as two separate corporeal beings. This is the vision which is according to the Mormons, the first revelation given to any man that God is not Trinity as defined by the orthodox creeds of the Christian Church. Further, this vision is the cornerstone upon which all else that Joseph Smith claimed as revelation rests.

However, in 1965 shock waves went through the hallowed halls of Mormonism's Brigham Young University. A student, Paul R. Cheesman, doing an M.A. Thesis entitled "An Analysis of the accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions", unearthed a document written by Joseph Smith himself, which not only makes it evident that he did not see both the Father and the Son in 1820, but also casts a shadow of doubt over his entire story of the origins of the church itself.

On September 21, 1823, Smith continues, 6. "I had a second vision. A personage appeared at my bedside who was glorious beyond description. He said that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do, and that 'my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindred, and tongues.' He told me that a book had been deposited, written on golden plates, giving an account of the former inhabitant of this continent and containing 'the ancient inhabitants of this land.' He also said that there were 'two stones in silver bows - and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim deposited with the plates', adding that God has prepared these stones for the

---

<sup>2</sup> Obtained on the 6/6/96, from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Public relations office - Sydney, Australia.

<sup>3</sup> In describing the following events, I am drawing upon Smith's own autobiography as reproduced in one of the sacred books of Mormonism, Pearl of Great Price.

<sup>4</sup> Pearl of Great Price, Extracts from the History of Joseph Smith the Prophet pages 46-57.

purpose of translating this book.”<sup>5</sup>

In the vision, Smith states that he was shown exactly where the plates had been deposited. That same night, the heavenly messenger appeared again twice, each time repeating the same message. The next day, Smith reports that he went to a hill outside the village where we lived (called the hill Cumorah) and found the golden plates deposited in a stone box with the Urim and Thummim and the breastplate. He was not permitted to take them out at this time, however, but was told by the angel, who had reappeared, that he should come back to this place every year at this time for the next four years. Finally, however, on September 22, 1827, Smith claims he was given the plates by the heavenly messenger, with instructions to keep them carefully until he, the angel, should call for them again. Some months previous to this date, on January 18, 1827, Smith had been married to Emma Hale, of Harmony, Pennsylvania, having eloped with her after Emma's father had refused to give his consent to their

7.

marriage. This rejection only added to Smith's troubles as he faced increasing persecution after his reception of the gold plates, which prompted him to move to the house of his wife's father in Harmony, Pennsylvania. There he began to copy the characters off the plates and, by means of the Urim and Thummim (see Exod.28:30, to translate some of them. At about this time, Mr. Martin Harris, a New York farmer who was befriending Smith and was planning to finance the publication of the book which would result from the translation of the plates, wanted to have some assurance that the plates were genuine and that they were being translated correctly. Though Harris was first under the impression that the characters on the golden plates were Hebrew, Smith explained to him that they were actually an altered or Reformed Egyptian. To satisfy Harris, Smith gave him the characters that had been copied from the plates; Harris then took these characters, together with a translation of them, to a certain professor, Charles Anton in New York City. According to Smith's autobiography, Professor Anton identified the characters supposedly copied from the plates as 'Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian, and Arabic,' and affirmed that the translation of them was correct, 'more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian.' Upon learning of Smith's claim concerning Professor Anton, Mr. Howe wrote him at Columbia. Professor Anton's letter reproduced here from Howe's own collection is a classic piece of evidence the Mormons would like very much to see forgotten.

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

NEW YORK, N.Y. Feb. 17th, 1834. 8.  
Mr. E. D. Howe, Painseville, Ohio.

Dear Sir,

I received this morning your favour of the 9th instant, and lose no time in making a reply. The whole story about my having pronounced the Mormonite inscription to be "reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics" is perfectly false. Some years ago, a plain, and apparently simple hearted farmer, called upon me with a note from Dr. Mitchell of our city, now deceased, requesting me to decipher, if possible, a paper, which the farmer would hand me, and which Dr. Mitchell confessed he had been unable to understand. Upon examining the paper in question, I soon came to the conclusion that it was all a trick, perhaps a hoax. When I asked the person, who brought it, how he obtained the writing, he gave me, as far I can now recollect, the following account. A 'gold book', consisting of a number of plates of gold, fastened together in the shape of a book by wires of the same metal, had been dug up in the northern part of the state of New York, and along with the book an enormous pair of gold spectacles! These spectacles were so large, that, if a person attempted to look through them, his two eyes would have to be turned towards one of the glasses merely, the spectacles in question being altogether too large for the breadth of the human face. Whoever examined the plates through the spectacles, was enabled not only to read them, but fully to understand their meaning. All this knowledge, however, was confined at that time to a young man, who had the trunk containing the book and spectacles in his sole possession. This young man was placed behind a curtain, in the garret of a farm house, and being thus concealed from view, put on the spectacles occasionally, or rather looked through one of the glasses, deciphered the characters in the book, and, having committed some of them to paper, handed copies from behind the curtain, to those who stood on the outside. Not a word, however, was said about the plates having been deciphered 'by the gift of God.' Everything, in this way, was effected by the large pair of spectacles. The farmer added, that he had been requested to contribute a sum of money towards the publication of the 'golden book' the contents of which would, as he had been assured, produce an entire change in the world and save it from ruin. So urgent had been these solicitations, that he intended selling his farm and handing over the amount received to those who wished to publish the plates. As a last precautionary step, however, he had resolved to come to New York, and obtain the opinion of the learned about the meaning of the paper which he brought with him, and which had given him as a part of the contents of the book, although no translation had been furnished at the time by the young man with the spectacles. On hearing this odd story, I changed my opinion about the paper, and, instead of viewing it any longer as a hoax upon the learned, I began to regard it as part of a scheme to cheat the farmer of his money, and I communicated my suspicions to him, warning him to beware of rogues. He requested an opinion from me in writing which of course I declined giving, and he then took his leave carrying the paper with him. This paper was in fact a singular scrawl. It consisted of all kinds of crooked characters disposed in columns, and had evidently been prepared by some person who had before him at the time a book containing various alphabets. Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses and flourishes, Roman letters inverted or placed side ways, were arranged in perpendicular columns and the whole ended in a rude delineation of a circle, divided into various compartments, decked with various strange marks, and evidently copied after the Mexican Calender given by Humboldt, but copied in such a way as not to betray the source whence it was derived. I am thus particular as to the contents of the paper, in as much as I have frequently conversed with my friends on the subject, since the Mormonite excitement began, and well

remember that the paper contained anything else but 'Egyptian Hieroglyphics.' Some time after, the same farmer paid me a second visit. He brought with him the golden book in print, and offered it to me for sale. I declined purchasing. He then asked permission to leave the book with me for examination. I declined receiving it, although his manner was strangely urgent. I adverted once more to the roguery which had been in my opinion practised upon him, and asked him what had become of the gold plates. He informed me that they were in a trunk with the large pair of spectacles. I advised him to go to a magistrate and have the trunk examined. He said the 'curse of God' would come upon him should he do this. On my pressing him, however, to pursue the course which I had recommended, he told me that he would open the trunk, if I would take the 'curse of God' upon myself. I replied that I would do so with the greatest willingness, and would incur every risk of that nature, provided I could only extricate him from the grasp of rogues. He then left me. I have thus given you a full statement of all that I know respecting the origin of Mormonsim, and

must beg you, as a personal favour, to publish this letter immediately, should you find my name mentioned again by these wretched fanatics.

Yours faithfully, Charles Anton.”<sup>6</sup>

In April of 1829, Joseph Smith and a former school teacher, Oliver Cowdery, came together to commence translating the Book of Mormon, Smith doing the ‘translating’, and Cowdery recording all that he was told by Smith. In May of 1829, Smith and Cowdery went into the woods to pray. While they were praying they claim a heavenly messenger, who identified himself as John the Baptist descended and conferred upon both them both the priesthood of Aaron. Smith states they both began to prophesy and to understand the true meaning of the Scriptures. Shortly after this, so it is claimed, the Melchizedek, or higher priesthood was also conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery at a place along the banks of the Susquehanna River, by Peter, James and John. On the opening pages of every copy of the Book of Mormon, the reader will find the so called Testimony of three witnesses. Smith had been told that he was not to show the plates to anyone except to certain witnesses who were to be designated by divine revelation. Joseph Smith tells the story of these three witnesses, that after the translation of the Book of Mormon had been completed, the following three men desired to be the witnesses of the golden plates: Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris. These three men went into the woods with Smith and knelt in prayer. Suddenly an angel stood before them, holding the plates in his hands and turning them leaf by leaf. Later all three of these witnesses apostatised from the Mormon faith, and were described as “thieves and counterfeiters” by their contemporaries. (see - Journal of Discourses, vol. 7, p.164; Elders Journal, August, 1838, p.59.) Apparently not satisfied with the witness of these three men, Smith later called eight other witnesses to view the plates and to give their testimony, a testimony which is also featured in every authentic copy of

12.

the Book of Mormon. On March 26, 1830, the Book of Mormon, now complete, was first placed on sale in the Palmyra bookstore. The first printing was financed by Martin Harris, who had had to mortgage his farm to pay for it. On April 6,

1830, at Fayette, New York, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was officially organised: that same year the church was incorporated. There were but six members at first, the oldest being only thirty-one years of age. Smith and Cowdery ordained each other as elders. Within a month, the number of members had jumped to forty.

The gold plates along with the Urimm and the Thummim (Gold Spectacles) supposedly used to translate them have since conveniently disappeared from the face of the Earth. **2. What do**

## **Mormons believe ?**

### **i) Source of Authority - Book of Mormon.**

The Book of Mormon, published in 1830, is along with Doctrine and Covenants, The Pearl of Great Price, and the King James Version of the Bible, (“insofar as it is correctly translated”), considered to make up the full canon of what Mormons would call ‘authorised Scripture’. The primary book for Mormons is the Book of Mormon. This book is purportedly an account of two great waves of immigration to the America's. The nation called Jaredites which left from the region around the Tower of Babel at about 2,250 B.C. and travelled by eight barges to the West Coast of Central America. There it is said, they built large cities and widespread civilisation occurred (Elephants, asses, horses, steel, large buildings etc.,..) These people fought one another leaving only one survivor - The Prophet Ether.

The second, and more important, immigration to America was that of Lehi and his descendants which happened about 600B.C. Lehi's son was Nephi the prophet and thus this people called themselves Nephites. They lived to supposedly see Jesus Christ come into their midst in A.D. 34, after the ascension in Jerusalem. By A.D. 385, they had become two tribes, Lamanites (dark skin). the rebellious tribes, and the Nephites who had favour in the Lord's eyes. These two groups had a battle and all were killed except one person, Moroni who's father's name was Mormon. It was Ether, Mormon, Moroni and others who through their history had written down the secular and spiritual histories of these civilisations. Eventually Moroni, the only Nephite survivor, put all these books onto gold plates and buried them in the hill Cumorah in A.D. 421. Fourteen hundred years later, so

---

<sup>6</sup> Walter Martin ,The Kingdom of the Cults ,p160-1.Bethany Fellowship,1977.



Mormons claim, in the years 1823 - 1827, Moroni now changed into an angel appeared to Joseph Smith, told him where the plates were hidden, and permitted him to take them.

## ii) **The Book of Mormon - History or Fantasy ?**

The Book of Mormon tell us in 2 Nephi 5:15; Ether 9:17-19, Heleman 3:8; Ether 15:2 that these civilisations, supposedly established in the Americas, had buildings, machinery, iron, copper, brass, steel, all manners of tools, grain, silks, cattle, oxen, cows, sheep, swine, goats, horses, asses, elephants, shipping, temples, synagogues, swords, breastplates, arm shields, head plates, armour, and 38 major cities, and Mormon 1:7 states that the "whole face of the land covered in civilisation."

These vast civilisations started in 2,250 B.C. and basically finishing A.D. 421, (the American Indians being the remnant), should by all the laws of archeological research have left vast amounts of finds to be evaluated.

However, there is nothing !

The department of Anthropology of Columbia University in New York City said in response to the question of their response to the Book of Mormon. "However, I may say that I do not believe that there is a single thing of value concerning the pre-history of the American Indian in the Book of Mormon and I believe that the great majority of American archeologists would agree with me. The book is untrue Biblically, historically, and scientifically."<sup>7</sup>

The Smithsonian Institute in Washington has also added its voice against the archeological claims of the Book of Mormon. Such a highly regarded scientific source the Mormons can ill afford to ignore.

"There is no correspondence whatever between archeological sites and cultures as revealed by scientific investigations, and as recorded in the Book of Mormon. Interpretations of archeological and ethnographic data, moreover, are quite unlike the American pre-history which the Book of Mormon describes. It can be stated definitely that there is no connection between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the Book of Mormon."<sup>8</sup>

**3. The Mormon doctrine of God** Mormons have been charged with worshipping Adam as their God, (the Adam-God theory), with being Unitarians (Stressing the oneness of God, and denying the divinity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit), and Polytheists (Worshipping many gods). The Mormons must take the blame for this confusion due to their lack of any real consistent body of theological material explaining their doctrine of God.

There are many reasons for this confusion surrounding the Mormon doctrine of God, not the least of which is the apparent change in Joseph Smith's teachings on this matter, as evidenced by contrasting the 'revelations' in the Book of Mormon with the Book of Abraham, and his later sermons.

The controversy caused by Joseph's successor, Brigham Young, and his speculations regarding Adam being God, from which the Adam-God Theory has its origins also created a good deal of confusion.<sup>9</sup> We shall discuss points a) and b) in detail later.

In his classic volume, Revelation in Mormonism (1932), G.B. Arbaugh, argues exhaustively the case that Mormon theology progressed from Unitarianism to Polytheism. However, the most recent official Mormon Theological literature displays a further step in the evolution, towards Henotheism or monolatry, a school of thought within Polytheism. Henotheism is the worship of one God without denying the existence of others.

Mormon Theologians generally dislike the accusation of being labelled Polytheists, as Mormon Apostle, Bruce R. McConkie demonstrates in the Mormon publication, Mormon Doctrine,"The saints are not polytheists."(p.579). Therefore, the label of Henotheism is still not adequate to describe the

---

<sup>7</sup> quote - W. Martin p. 162 Kingdom of the Cults.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> See - The Latter Day Saint's Millennial Star on Nov. 26, 1853 (vol.15,pp769-70) for Brigham Youngs 1852 (April 9) sermon in which he say's "Adam...is our Father and our God, and the only one with whom we have to do." See - Doctrines of Salvation, vol.1,pp.96-106, Salt lake City. 1975. , for a full explanation of official Mormon teaching on Adam. Adam is viewed by Mormons as the preexistent Angel Michael and consider him a god in the same way that they consider Abraham or Paul as 'gods'. Officially the Mormons do not worship Adam, yet esteem him as directly under Christ in the patriarchal order of the universe. However if you read Brigham Youngs sermon in full it is clear he created great confusion with this 'new revelation'.

official Mormon position, which is inconsistent and confusing at best. During 1995 I conducted a survey of the best official Mormon Theological literature (see Bibliography), and had numerous and extensive private discussions with several Australian Mormon Elders. Through this research it became obvious to me that a clearly defined doctrine of God did not exist within this Church. Since the Mormons reject outright the Early Church Creeds, such as Athanasius Creed, they have not set about providing a comprehensive replacement. The closest they have come is the work of Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, which is a general Dictionary of their doctrine. Written in non-technical language, it suffers from a lack of precision and consistency. It is therefore, inadequate for providing us with a seminal statement as to the 'official' Mormon doctrine of God. Joseph Smith was quick to pull down the building of orthodox Christian Theism, but was ill-equipped and failed to provide his followers with a replacement. I believe the legacy of his 'revelations' have left a people blind and groping in a theological vacuum. Evidence of this abounds as you read Mormon leaders' endless doctrinal speculations; a plethora of ideas about God's nature and character which seem to be constantly evolving. Joseph Smith himself appears to have changed his Theology extensively over his life time.

**i) One God or Many ?**

Joseph Smith's first published work, the Book of Mormon (1830), seems to be in harmony with the Bible in stating a monotheistic view of God. In Alma 11:26-31, it states, " Now, Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God? And he answered, No. " 17.

This concurs with Isaiah 44:5 were we read"...I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God."

Similarly, the Book of Mormon appears to also teach that God is Spirit,

in Alma 18:26-28; "And then Ammon said: Believest thou that there is a Great Spirit ? And he said, Yea, And Ammon said: This is God." Again this is what the Bible teaches in John 4:24; Jeremiah 23:24,etc.,

The Book of Mormon also agrees with the Bible about the fact that Christ was God Himself manifest in the flesh. It says in Mosiah 15:1,2, and 5: "God Himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. And because he dwelleth in the flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, being the Father and the Son...And thus the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit, or the Son to the Father, being one God..." (see 2 Cor.5:19;Jn.1:1ff.).

However, it appears that radical changes in Smith's doctrine occurred some time after 1830, when the Book of Mormon was first published. Certainly by 1835, when Joseph procured the Book of Abraham and supposedly commenced translating this papyrus, we see the first evidence of a change. In the Pearl of Great Price we find two 'inspired' books (received by Joseph Smith as divine revelation), namely the Book of Moses and the Book of Abraham. The Book of Abraham was, according to Joseph Smith's own History of the Christian Church, (vol.2,p 236), given some years after the Book of Moses. The earlier Book of Moses states, " 'I, God' created the heavens and the earth", whilst the later Book of Abraham states that "they (the Gods) created them".

The following examples are further proof of the change in Smith's theology and add weight to fact that he manufactured these writings to suit his personal doctrinal whims.

<b>Book of Moses</b>	<b>Book of Abraham</b>
"...the Lord spake unto Moses saying: Behold I reveal unto Abraham,	"And the Lord said unto me: I show these things you concerning this heaven, and this earth;
"And I God, said : Let there be light; and there was light."	"And they (the Gods, said: Let there be light; and there was light."
"And I , God, called the dry	"And the Gods pronounced the
"And I, God, made the beasts	
"And I, the Lord God, planted	"And the Gods planted a garden

unto thee before ye go into write the Egypt, that ye may declare all words which I speak..." these words.."

land earth..." dry land, earth."

"And the Gods organised the of the earth after their kind..."

earth to bring forth the beasts after their kind..."

a garden eastward in Eden..." in Eden..."

(Moses 2:1,3,10,25; 3:8) (Abraham 3:15; 4:3,10,25; 5:8)

It becomes quite obvious why there is so much confusion amongst critics of Mormonism as to what it is Mormons actually believe regarding the nature and character of God. Here we have two books that Joseph Smith claimed (and the Mormons still claim) are definitely 'authorized Scripture'. The problem is that they clearly contradict one another on this key doctrine of God. It is clear today that officially the Mormon Church endorses a plurality of Gods,

" There are three Gods - Father, Son, and Holy Ghost - who, though separate in personality, are united as one in purpose, in plan, and in all the attributes of perfection."<sup>10</sup>

The scholar of Mormonism has yet more anomalies to face in the 'Lectures on Faith', published in the first edition (1835) of the Doctrine and Covenants. Considered by Mormons to be inspired revelation this text declares that there were only two persons in the Godhead - the Father and the Son - and that the Holy Ghost is the mind of the Father and the Son. <sup>11</sup>

As late as 1855 Mormon Apostle, Orson Pratt was still not certain whether there was a personal Holy Ghost, stating,"...I am inclined to think from some things in the revelations, that there is such a being as a personal Holy Ghost...I cannot fully make my mind up one way or the other."<sup>12</sup>

Today Mormon leaders do teach that "...the Holy Ghost is a personage of Spirit, he constitutes the third person in the Godhead."<sup>13</sup>

Confusion abounds however, when you also read in authorised Mormon literature the following, " It has been said that God is everywhere present; but this does not mean that the actual person of any one member of the Godhead can be physically present in more than one place at one time."<sup>14</sup>

20. This statement above begs the obvious question, that if God is Spirit, how can He then be bound by spatial, physical, and time restraints? This is a classic example of man making God in his image, reminiscent of what the Greeks did in much of their mythology of finite gods. God then ceases to be the omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient Eternal Being, and is reduced to being finite glorified humanity. **ii) God - The Glorified Man ?**

In a sermon Joseph Smith preached in April 1844, just three months before his martyrdom, we find further evidence of a definite change in his beliefs, when he preached that God was just an exalted man and that men could become Gods.

" God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heavens, **is a man like unto one of yourselves**, that is the great secret...I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined that God was God from all eternity...God himself; the Father of us all dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ himself did...You have got to learn to be Gods yourselves...No man can learn you more than what I have told you."<sup>15</sup> (emphasis mine)

In a separate public sermon from the same year, Joseph Smith further confirmed his newfound polytheism by stating;

---

<sup>10</sup> Mc Conkie Bruce.R., Mormon Doctrine, p.317., second edition, Bookcraft, Salt lake City, Utah,1966.

<sup>11</sup> Doctrine and Covenants, 1835 ed., pp.52, 53, 55, 57, 58; removed from modern editions.

<sup>12</sup> Journal of Discourses, vol 2, p.338.

<sup>13</sup> The Restored Church, 1956, p.541.

<sup>14</sup> Talmuge J.E.,The Articles of Faith, p.42,Salt Lake City, Church of Jesus Christ,1952.

<sup>15</sup> Times and Seasons, vol.5.,pp.613-614, Nauvoo, Ill.;1839-46.- a Mormon periodical.

“ I will preach on the plurality of Gods...I wish to declare I have always and in all congregations when I preached on the subject of Deity, it has been the plurality of Gods. It has been preached by the Elders for fifteen years. I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute  
21.

three distinct personages and three Gods. If this is in accordance with the New Testament, lo and behold! We have three Gods, anyhow, and they are plural; and who can contradict it?”<sup>16</sup>

To the Mormon mind God is a corporeal being even as we are, literally flesh and bones. Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, states, “ ...God...is a personal Being, a holy and exalted man, a glorified, resurrected Personage having a tangible body of flesh and bones, an anthropomorphic Entity...” <sup>17</sup> This notion of God is entirely foreign to the Bible. Jesus said in John 4:24 "God is Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth." (Is. 43:10-11; 44:6; 45:21-22.) **iii) God - The Procreating Father and Mother ?**

Mormonism seeks to reduce God to a carnal plane and even ascribes to him human methods of reproduction fully in keeping with the immoral and polygamous character of Smith and Young, who allegedly had 27 wives each and the latter 56 children.

At the centre of their theology is the belief that God is literally a procreating father and that he is married to a Mrs. God or divine mother.

Apostle Bruce R. McConkie confirmed his Church's belief in this by stating;

“ This doctrine that there is a Mother in Heaven was affirmed in plainness by the First Presidency of the Church (Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anton H. Lund)...they said that “man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents...”<sup>18</sup> <sup>22</sup>.

Though seldom discussed outside church circles, the divine mother is key to the fundamental Mormon conviction that marriage, procreation and parenthood are what life is all about in this world and the next. The emphasis on procreation is central to the Mormon concept that life is meant to be an ‘eternal progression’ toward human godhood. This attitude toward the human destiny is summed up in the famous Mormon aphorism: "As man now is, God once was; as God now is, man may become."<sup>19</sup> This means that God himself was once a man in another world, that he had parents of his own, He married, achieved godhood and procreated spirit children. He also devised a plan of salvation whereby his spirit children would descend to Earth, acquire bodies and learn how to achieve godhood for themselves.

#### **4. The Mormon Idea of Human Destiny.**

In the Mormon view of human destiny, progression toward godhood continues after death. Joined together for all eternity in heaven, devout Mormon couples advance in knowledge and power, purify their lives and, eventually, spawn spirit children of their own. As father and mother gods in their own right, they will ultimately "organise" new planets for their children, thus repeating an endless cycle of reproduction. For Mormons, the cycle extends backward as well. God the Father, they assume, also had a divine father, a grandfather and so on into infinity.

Herbert C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, said, “...then we shall go back to our Father and God, who is connected with one who is still farther back; and this Father is connected with one

23.

still further back, and so on...”<sup>20</sup> Unlike Jews, Christians and Muslims, therefore, Mormons do not

---

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, ed, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Co. , 1977, p.370.

<sup>17</sup> McConkie Bruce R.,Mormon Doctrine, p.250;322.,1966, Bookcraft, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p.516.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p.322.

<sup>20</sup> Journal of Discourses, vol. 5, p.19.,see also Ibid., vol.8,p.211.

define their God as a Supreme Being. Matter is all that exists. They hold that even God has a body and is subject to the laws governing the universe. Thus, for Mormons, God did not create human beings out of nothing but procreated them from eternally existing elements of intelligence. "Since human beings always existed in some elemental form, says Mormon convert James E. Ford, an English professor at BYU., "Mormon doctrine means that ultimately we are not dependent upon God for our existence. And since we can make ourselves as godly as the Father, we don't feel any jealousy toward him." <sup>21</sup>

A careful reading of the Book of Abraham will reveal that life on this earth was designed by the gods to discipline their spirit children and at the same time provide them with the opportunities to reproduce and eventually inherit godhood and individual kingdoms as their personal possessions. The Mormon doctrine of salvation involves not only faith in Christ, but baptism by immersion, obedience to the teaching of the Mormon church, good works, and "Keeping the commandments of God which will cleanse away the stain of sin"<sup>22</sup>

24.

### **5. Conclusion: Mormonism - a House of Orderly Confusion.**

In the midst of the utter confusion within Mormonism regarding their doctrine of God, especially in the teachings of Joseph Smith. One could be forgiven for laughing mockingly at the 'divine revelation' stated in the Mormon Doctrine & Covenants 132:8, where it states regarding the issue of receiving new revelation," the Lord's house is a house of order and not a house of confusion."

In the same book in section 43:2-7 we read,"There is no other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken" The Lord said of the Prophet (Joseph Smith)."<sup>23</sup> If we are to accept as divine revelation the contradictory and confusing teachings of 'the Prophet' Joseph Smith, then we are left with an array of direct and blatant contradictions in our doctrine of God. Unlike someone who evolved their doctrine of God from the Bible and began, for example, to discover the truth of the Triune Godhead, thus going from being a Unitarian to a Trinitarian, Joseph Smith presented one dose of 'divine revelation' regarding the Godhead to the world in the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses, namely a monotheistic view, and later another completely contradictory doctrine of God (Polytheism) in the Book of Abraham, and in various sermons as quoted above. Further to this the Mormon Church teaches that new revelation can come through the Presidency of their Church.<sup>24</sup> However, when 'new' revelation contradicts the old rather than developing , as in the case of Theophany in the Old Testament becoming Christophony in the New Testament (in the Incarnation of Christ), one has to begin to

25.

seriously question not only the credibility, but also the basic intelligence, of the presenter of such supposed 'revelations' from God, or should I have said, 'from the God's' ?

Having denied the creeds of the early Christian Church Fathers who wrestled with the Biblical revelation of God to the point where they evolved a comprehensive doctrine of God, who is one God in Trinity, it rests with the Mormon Church to answer the charge of heresy.

---

<sup>21</sup> Kenneth L. Woodward, from an article in Newsweek, Sept.1, 1980, p.47-48.

<sup>22</sup> Pearl of Great Price, ch. 4 of the Book of Moses, see also-Journal of discourses, vol. 2:4.

<sup>23</sup> McConkie Bruce R.,Mormon Doctrine, p.646-7,.1966, Bookcraft, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p. 646-7.

# God in the Hands of Angry Sinners 26.

## Part 1. - Making God in Our Image !

B) Jehovahs Witnesses...and the View of God From the Watchtower.

### Introduction

This chapter will present an overview of the Jehovah's Witnesses historical development, their view of the Bible, their teachings on the Trinity, Christology, God's Name, and the Holy Spirit. A brief Biblical rebuttle of their views will be interspersed within each section to provide the reader with a foretaste of the more complete presentation of the doctrine of the Trinity in the last section of this work.

### 1. Historical Perspective

The name Jehovah's Witnesses was adopted officially at Columbus, Ohio, in 1931, to differentiate between the Watch Tower and the true followers of Russell as represented by The Dawn Bible Students. C. T. Russell was born on February 16th, 1852, the son of Joseph L. and Anne Eliza Russell, and spent the majority of his early years in Pittsburgh and Allegheny, Pennsylvania. At only 25 years of age his administrative abilities had already manifested and he was known to be manager of several men's furnishing stores. Having been raised as a Congregationalist Russell decided at an early age that the doctrine of eternal torment was unpalatable to his thinking and therefore unbiblical. It was adoption of these kind of unorthodox ideas which commenced his lifetime quest to disparage "Organised Religions." By 1870, at the age of 18, Russell had organised a Bible class in Pittsburgh which in 1876 elected him "Pastor" of the group.

In 1879 Russell founded "Zion's Watch Tower" which is known today 27. as "The Watch Tower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom", otherwise known as the Jehovah's Witnesses. Over the years since 1879 this organisation's regular publication, The Watch Tower, has grown in circulation from 6,000 in 1879 to the staggering figure of nearly 244,000,000 in 1975 (in 78 different languages). Worldwide the organisation has grown numerically from a dozen or so people in 1870 to some 8 million in 1995. In Australia in 1980, the number of Australians who attended a 'Kingdom Hall' for worship each week was around 38,000. By 1995 that figure had risen to around 73,000.<sup>25</sup>

The year 1884 saw "Pastor" Russell incorporate "Zion Watch Tower Tract Society" at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which in 1886 published the first in a series of seven books (Russell wrote six) entitled "Studies in the Scriptures." The sixth volume was published in 1904 and the seventh in 1917 after his death. The seventh volume "The Finished Mystery", caused a split in the organisation. The larger group followed J. F. Rutherford (Pastor Russell's successor in the movement) and later they took the name "Jehovah's Witnesses". The smaller group subsequently became "The Dawn Bible Students Association." C.T. Russell, a self styled teacher of the Bible, who never had any higher education, continued his teaching until his death on October 31st, 1916, aboard a transcontinental train in Texas. He was to leave a legacy of poor Theology and blatant heresy that has lead millions into spiritual darkness.

### 2. Source of Authority - The Bible ? 28.

#### i) The Jehovah's Witnesses New World Translation of the Bible.

It appears that the goal of the New World Translation Committee was to take from the Bible any vestige of Jesus Christ's identification with Yahweh.<sup>26</sup> Upon investigation any honest scholar will realise that the New World Translation is an incredibly biased one. British Scholar H.H. Rowley has stated; "From the beginning to end this volume is a shining example of how the Bible should not be

---

<sup>25</sup> Service Year Report of Jehovah's Witnesses Worldwide,p.24, 1981, 1996.Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>26</sup> Tucker, R. Another Gospel, Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1989. p.142

translated.”<sup>27</sup>

The Jehovah’s Witnesses often quote the most highly regarded New Testament Greek scholars to reinforce their controversial mistranslations (e.g. John 1:1; 8:58). Dr Julius Mantey, author of Immanuel Grammar of the Greek New Testament is one such scholar. However he calls the New World Translation “a shocking mistranslation.”<sup>28</sup> Dr Bruce M. Metzger, Professor of New Testament at Princeton University, calls the New World Translation; “a frightful mistranslation, erroneous, pernicious and reprehensible.”<sup>29</sup> Dr William Barclay concluded that; “The deliberate distortion of truth by this sect is seen in their New Testament translation. It is abundantly clear that a sect which can translate the New Testament like that is intellectually dishonest.”<sup>30</sup>

The Watchtower Society has always tried to keep the identity of its translation committee for the New World Translation anonymous on the grounds of humility. However, in recent times the translation committee’s identity has been revealed. Four of the five men in the committee had no Hebrew or Greek training whatsoever (they had only a high school education). The fifth member, Fred .W. Franz claimed to know Hebrew

29.

and Greek but upon examination under oath in a court of law in Edinburgh Scotland, November 24th 1954, he was found to fail a simple Hebrew test. The truth of the matter is that Franz like the others on the New World Translation Committee cannot translate Hebrew or Greek. In fact Franz dropped out of the University of Cincinnati after his sophomore year and even while there he had not studied anything related to ancient Greek or Theology. In the same court case Franz made the claim that he was in fact offered a Rhodes Scholarship but declined on the basis that he wished to enter full-time ministry.<sup>31</sup> **ii) Extra Biblical Sources of Authority.**

The September 15th, 1910, edition of the Watch Tower, the "Pastor" made the following claim,

“If the six volumes of "Scripture Studies" are practically the Bible, topically arranged with Bible proof texts given, we might not improperly name the volumes "The Bible in an Arranged Form." That is to say, they are not mere comments on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself. Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also that if anyone lays the "Scripture Studies" aside, even after he has used them, after he has become

familiar with them after he has read them for ten years - if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the

30.

"Scripture Studies", their references and had not read a page of the Bible as such, he would be in the light at the end of two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.”<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> H.H Rowley, How not to Translate the Bible, the Expository Times,no. 1953 pp41-42.

<sup>28</sup> Rhodes R. Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Harvest House Publishers Oregon, 1993, p.97

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*

<sup>31</sup> See appendix C for full documentary proof that F.W. Franz did claim in this court case to have been offered a Rhodes Scholarship. A copy of the original letter from the Rhodes Scholarship trust states categorically that F .W. Franz was never offered such a scholarship. Appendix C also features a section quoting various New Testament and Greek scholars that the Watchtower Society seeks to claim as authorities for their translation of John 1:1. These various quotations document that these biblical scholars in no way support the New World Translation as having any credibility. Appendix C features quotes from the scripture that prove that Jesus is God along with quotations from early Church Fathers often quoted by the Jehovah’s Witnesses out of context when attempting to demonstrate that the early Church Fathers did not believe that Christ was God.

<sup>32</sup> "THE WATCH TOWER" , September 15th, 1910; page 298

Cult Researcher, the late Walter R. Martin said, "...the Jehovah's Witnesses deny any Theological connection whatsoever with "Pastor" Charles T. Russell, their admitted founder and first president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Since Russell was long ago proven to be a perjurer under oath, a sworn adversary of historic Christianity, and a scholastic fraud, it is obvious why the Witnesses seek to avoid his influence and memory whenever possible."<sup>33</sup>

However, even after Russell's death, the Watch Tower magazine quoted Russell's writings on many occasions<sup>34</sup>, and the cult he spawned is still a sworn enemy of the historic Christian faith, claiming exclusive authority in all matters of Biblical Doctrine, and primarily in their doctrine of God. **3.**

### **The Jehovah's Witnesses Doctrine of God.**

In order to properly represent the Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine of God we will allow the material published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society to represent their position.<sup>35</sup>

i) Should you believe in the Trinity ? 31.

The Watchtower publication, Should you believe in the Trinity?, asks,

"If people were to read the Bible from cover to cover without any preconceived idea would they arrive at such a concept on their own? Not at all." <sup>36</sup>

This publication goes on to claim that the Bible student would consistently find monotheism (belief that God is one) set forth. After all Jesus himself emphasised this kind of monotheism in John 17:3 where he referred to the Father as the only true God. Since Jesus called the Father the only true God then Jesus himself could not be that God.

The Watchtower Society argues that Jesus never taught any concept of the Trinity. In "Let God Be True", we read that; "It is passing strange that this complicating confusing doctrine received no attention by Christ Jesus by way of explanation or teaching".<sup>37</sup> This publication then raises what it apparently considers a knock-out punch argument against the Trinity. "One of the most mysterious things is the question who ran the universe during the three days that Jesus was dead and in the grave....If Jesus was God, then during Jesus' death God was dead and in the grave. What a wonderful opportunity for Satan to take complete control...if Jesus was the immortal God he could not have died." <sup>38</sup>

Another common Watchtower argument against the Trinity is that because God is not a God of disorder or confusion (1Cor 14:33), it is impossible that scripture would speak of a God that could not be understood by human reason. The idea that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God along with the parallel idea that there is just one God is incomprehensible and unreasonable since God is not a God

---

<sup>33</sup> Martin W. R., Kingdom of the Cults, p. 43., Bethany Fellowship, Minnesota, 1977.

<sup>34</sup> e.g. The Watch Tower p.216. , July 15, 1950., See also the pamphlet by the Watch Tower - Jehovah's Witnesses , Communists or Christians?,1953.

<sup>35</sup> The three main documents I will utilise in this presentation are the following recent Watchtower Publications, 'Should you believe in the Trinity (1989)', 'The Divine Name that will endure forever (1984)', 'Aid to Bible Understanding ' (1971), along with the Witnesses own version of the Bible, The New World Translation. Many other primary sources will be used, all are footnoted and found in the Bibliography.

<sup>36</sup> Should You Believe in the Trinity, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1989. p.2.

<sup>37</sup> Let God Be True, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1952. p.97.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. p. 98.



32.

of confusion. This concept of him can not be correct. Jesus said; "We worship what we know." (John 4:22) Besides, the word Trinity is not even in the Bible.

In response to this point Theologian Benjamin Warfield notes,

"The Old Testament may be likened to a chamber richly furnished but dimly lighted. The introduction of light brings into it nothing that was not in it before but it brings out into clearer view much of what is in it but was only dimly or even not at all perceived before. The mystery of the Trinity was not explicitly revealed in the Old Testament but the mystery of the Trinity underlies the Old Testament Revelation and here and there almost comes into view. Thus the Old Testament of God is not corrected by the fuller revelation which followed it but only perfected, extended and enlarged."<sup>39</sup>

The teaching that there is one God but three persons in the Godhead is the clear testimony of scripture. One key New Testament verse illustrating that truth is Matthew 28:19. The Watchtower Society in the New World Translation, translates this verse; "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." Does this verse prove that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are equal in substance, power and eternity? 'No', answers the Watchtower Society; "No more than listing three people such as Tom,

33.

Dick and Harry means that they are three in one."<sup>40</sup>

Jehovah's Witnesses say that Trinitarians are reading something into the text that is simply not there. The Doctrine of the Trinity, they say is simply imposed upon the text, not derived from it. The New American Standard Bible, Matthew 28:19 reads;"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." It is critical to note that the word "name" is singular in the Greek text indicating that there is one God but three distinct persons within the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.<sup>41</sup>

Theologian Robert Reymond draws our attention to the importance of this verse for the doctrine of the Trinity.

"Jesus does not say 1) "Into the names (plural) of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, or what is its virtual equivalent, 2) Into the name of the Father, and into the name of the Son and into the name of the Holy Spirit, as if we had to deal with three separate beings. Nor does he say, 3) Into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (omitting the three recurring articles) as if "The Father, Son and Holy Ghost might be taken as really three designations of a single person. What he does say is this, 4) Into the name (singular) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, first asserting the unity of the three by combining them all within the bounds of the single name and then throwing into emphasis the distinctness of each by introducing them in turn with the repeating article."<sup>42</sup>

Hence contrary to what the Watchtower Society says Matthew 28:19 definitely does support the doctrine of the Trinity and in an emphatic manner. 34.

In John 10:30 Jesus told a group of Jews; "I and the Father are one". What did he mean by this? Jehovah's Witnesses answer by pointing to John 17:21-22 where Jesus prayed to the Father that "...the disciples may all be one just as you Father are in union with me and I am in union with you that they may also be in union with us...that they may be one just as we are one." The Witnesses go on to argue that it is of great significance that Jesus used the same Greek word (hen) for 'one' in all of those instances.<sup>43</sup> Clearly Jesus was not praying for all the disciples to become a single entity nor

---

<sup>39</sup> Biblical and Theological Studies, Warefield, B.B., Phillipsburg, N.J. Presbyterian and Reformed publishing Company, 1968, p. 30

<sup>40</sup> Should you Believe in the Trinity, Boston, The Watchtower Book and Tract Society, 1989, p. 23

<sup>41</sup> The Person and Work of Christ, Warefield, B.B., Philadelphia, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1950, p 66.

<sup>42</sup> Jesus Divine Messiah, the New Testament Witness, Reymond R.L. Phillipsburg, N.J. Presbyterian and Reformed, 1990. p. 84

<sup>43</sup> Reasoning from the Scriptures, p. 424

was he praying that they would become a part of the Trinity.<sup>44</sup> Instead he was praying that they would have unity of thought and purpose just as he and the Father had.<sup>45</sup> “Just as Christ and his body members are regarded as one so are Jehovah and Christ regarded as one. They are all one in agreement, purpose and organisation.”<sup>46</sup>

The Biblical response to this teaching of the Watchtower Society is simple. As any first year Greek student can tell you the context is always determinative in how a given word is to be interpreted in a sentence. In different contexts the same word can carry different nuances of meaning. One must keep this in mind when interpreting the Greek word for one (hen). While the Greek word ‘hen’ by itself does not have to refer to more than unity of purpose the context of John 10 makes it clear that much more is meant.<sup>47</sup> How do we know this? By the way the Jews responded to Jesus’ affirmation that; “I and my Father are one.” They immediately picked up stones to put him to death. They understood that Jesus was claiming to be God in an unqualified sense. According to verse 33 the Jews

said; “For a good work we do not stone you, but for blasphemy , and  
35.

because you being a man make yourself out to be God. The penalty for blasphemy according to Old Testament Law in Leviticus 24 was death by stoning. Now the context in John 17:21 where Jesus prays that the disciples “...may all be one even as thou Father art in me and I in thee...” (NASB) is entirely different. In this context the Greek word for one refers to unity among people in the midst of their diversity. Just like today, believers back then had a tendency to be divisive over various issues. This is why Christ prayed for their unity. Among other things this kind of unity can be expressed in the proper exercise of spiritual gifts, Eph. 4:3-16 as well as in praying for one another and exhorting one another 2 Cor 1:11, Hebrews 10:25. It is critical to emphasise that one cannot adopt a wooden methodology in which a particular word’s usage in one verse determines how it is interpreted in another distant verse. That is the why the way the word is used in John 17:21 does not determine what its meaning is in John 10:30. We are dealing with two entirely different contexts.

Throughout its history the Watchtower Society has misrepresented the doctrine of the Trinity in order to make its denial more plausible to reasonable people. For example the Watchtower publication “Studies in the Scriptures”, (1899) said that; “this doctrine of three Gods in one God is one of the dark mysteries by which Satan through the Papacy has beclouded the world and character and plan of God.” Elsewhere in the same volume we find reference to the unreasonable and unscriptural doctrine of the Trinity, three Gods in one person. One Watchtower publication went so far as to refer to the Trinity as a freakish being.

“When the clergy are asked by their followers as to how such a combination of three in one can possibly exist, they are obliged to answer, “That is a mystery”. Some will try to illustrate by using triangles, trefoils,

36.

or images with three heads on one neck. Nevertheless sincere persons who want to know the true God and serve him find it a bit difficult to love and worship a complicated freakish looking three-headed God. The clergy who inject such ideas and contradict themselves in the very next breath by stating that God made man in his own image, for certainly no-one has ever seen a three headed human creature.”<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Reasoning From the Scriptures p.424

<sup>45</sup> Should you Believe in the Trinity, Boston, The Watchtower Book and Tract Society, 1989, p. 24

<sup>46</sup> Let God be True, p. 104.

<sup>47</sup> Why you should Believe in the Trinity, Bowman, p. 88.

<sup>48</sup> Let God Be True, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1952. p102.

The Watchtower Society argues that the Doctrine of the Trinity is not only of Satanic origins but is a pagan concept. They cite a book entitled, "The Paganism in our Christianity", which states; "The origin of the Trinity is entirely Pagan."<sup>49</sup>

It is argued that many centuries before the time of Christ that there were triads or Trinities of gods in Ancient Babylonia, Egypt and Assyria.<sup>50</sup>

It is argued that this Satanic Pagan concept was assimilated into Christian theology in the early centuries of the Christian Church. To be more specific the Watchtower Society says that the concept of the Trinity was adopted by the Church some three hundred years after Christ died.<sup>51</sup> According to the 1990 Watchtower publication, "Mankind's Search For God" the emperor Constantine wanted unity in his realm and in 325 AD he called for a council of his Bishops at Nicaea. Between 250 and 318 Bishops, (a minority of Bishops) were said to have attended. This publication then states,

"After fierce debate out of that unrepresentative council came the Nicæan creed with its heavy bias toward Trinitarian thought. Yet it failed to settle the doctrinal argument. It was a victory for theology and a defeat

37.

for those who held to the scriptures."<sup>52</sup>

The Watchtower Society argues that this deviation from what the early church believed was prophesied by Christ and his apostles. They spoke of a falling away or an apostacy that would take place prior to Christ's return. Indeed besides the pagan doctrine of the Trinity other pagan concepts such as hell fire, immortality of the soul and idolatry became part of Christendom bringing about a spiritual dark ages dominated by a growing 'man of lawlessness' clergy class.<sup>53</sup> The Watchtower Society thus concludes; "To worship God on his terms means to reject the Trinity doctrine. It contradicts what the Prophets, Jesus, the Apostles, and the early Christians believed and taught. It contradicts what God says about himself in his own inspired word."<sup>54</sup>

One of the great arguments in response to the Jehovah's Witnesses claim that the word Trinity was a pagan concept is to simply point out that the concept of a great flood that killed much of human kind was also taught through many pagan cultures. They also taught the idea of a Messiah like figure (named Tammuz) who was even resurrected. Hence as Bible Scholar Paul .G. Weathers argues;

"If the Watchtower uses the same method of reasoning it follows that the Christian belief in the flood, the Messiah, Jesus and his resurrection are pagan. After all the pagans believed these things before the Christians."<sup>55</sup>

## **ii) Jehovah's Witnesses and the Divine Name. 38.**

Jehovah's Witnesses are told through Watchtower publications that God's true name is Jehovah. They are taught that superstitious Jewish scribes long ago removed this sacred name from the Bible but there is no need to worry, the Society's New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures has faithfully restored the Divine Name in the Old Testament where the Hebrew consonants YHWH

---

<sup>49</sup> Should You Believe in the Trinity, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1989. p. 3

<sup>50</sup> Should you believe in the Trinity, Brooklyn, Watchtower book and Tract Society, 1989. p.9

<sup>51</sup> *ibid*, p.6

<sup>52</sup> Mankinds Search for God, Brooklyn, Watchtower Book and Tract Society, 1990, p. 276

<sup>53</sup> Should You Believe in the Trinity, Brooklyn, Watchtower Book and Tract Society, 1989. p.12

<sup>54</sup> *ibid* p.31

<sup>55</sup> Answering the Arguments of Jehovah's Witnesses Against the Trinity, Contend for the Faith Wethers P.G. ed Eric Pement, Chicago, Emnr, 1992. p. 136

appear.<sup>56</sup>

Moreover the name Jehovah has been inserted in the New Testament by the Watchtower New World Bible Translation committee in verses where the text is believed to refer to the Father.<sup>57</sup> They have taken the liberty to do this despite the fact that it blatantly goes against the thousands of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament that we have, some of which date from the second century.

The New Testament always uses the word Lord (Greek Kurios) and God (Greek Theos) never Jehovah, (even in quotation marks) from the Old Testament.<sup>58</sup> The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that because they are the only group that refers to God by his true name Jehovah they are the only true followers of God. Indeed all other so-called Christian denominations are part of a false Satanically inspired Christendom. In response to the Jehovah's Witnesses claim that the term Jehovah is God's only true name it must be recognised that this term is not actually a biblical term; it is a man-made term. Ancient Jews had a superstitious dread of pronouncing the name YHWH. They felt that if they uttered this name they might violate the third commandment which deals with taking God's name in vain (Ex. 20:7). So to avoid the possibility of breaking this commandment the Jews for centuries substituted the name Adonai (Lord),

39.

or some other name in its place whenever they came across it in public readings of scripture. Eventually the fearful scribes decided to insert the vowels from Adonai (AOA) within the consonants YHWH.<sup>59</sup> The result was YAHOWAH or JEHOVAH. Hence the word Jehovah is derived from a consonant vowel combination from the words YHWH and Adonai. Watchtower literature acknowledges this fact.<sup>60</sup> In the scriptures we see that God is known by the name Jehovah (Yahweh) but he is not known only by the name Jehovah (Yahweh). God is identified in other ways in scripture besides the name Jehovah. Jesus never referred to God as Jehovah but rather called him Father. Believers are uniquely privileged to call God Father. The word Jehovah never occurs in the New Testament (according to all the Greek manuscripts)<sup>61</sup>.

In Exodus 3:15 the focus is not limited to a mere name of God but more importantly deals with the fact that people of all generations would come to understand who God is in his true nature and being. However, the Watchtower Society's claim that God must always be referred to by the name Jehovah or (Yahweh) does not coincide with the scriptural evidence. Though it is most certainly right to call God Yahweh it is also right to address him in other ways as both the Old and New Testaments testify. Marianne Bodine, an Evangelical Christian who is an authority in Watchtower Theology, says that the Watchtower's insertion of the name

40.

Jehovah in the New Testament (against all manuscript evidence) is "just another attempt on the part of the Jehovah's Witnesses to cloud the truth, that is that the name the New Testament consistently uplifts is Jesus not Jehovah."<sup>62</sup> Marriane Bodine suggests that there are a number of questions you can ask an interested Jehovah's Witness in order to demonstrate that the New Testament consistently uplifts Jesus not Jehovah. (Be sure to look up the accompanying verses when talking to a Jehovah's Witness.)

---

<sup>56</sup> Marion Bodine, Christian Research Newsletter, Bible Answer man; May-June 1992, p. 3

<sup>57</sup> Marion Bodine, Christian Research Newsletter, Bible Answer man; May-June 1992, p. 3

<sup>58</sup> Bowman R.M. Understanding Jehovah's Witnesses, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1991, p. 114

<sup>59</sup> Bowman p. 110

<sup>60</sup> Reasoning from the Scripture, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1989, p. 195

<sup>61</sup> This is not to deny that the Jehovah's Witnesses point to some manuscripts that contain the name Jehovah. A few copies of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament use Jehovah. But such manuscripts are held to be unreliable, the majority of the manuscripts know nothing of this name.

<sup>62</sup> Bodine p. 3

“In whose name should we meet together?(Matt 18:20; 1 Cor 5:4) \*Demons are subject to whose name? (Luke 10:17; Acts 16:18) \*Repentance and forgiveness should be preached in whose name? (Luke 24:47) \*In whose name are you to believe and receive the forgiveness of sins? (John 1:12, 3:16; Acts 10:43; 1John 3:23; 1John 5:13) \*By whose name and no other do we obtain salvation? (Acts 4:12) \*Whose name should be invoked as we bring our petitions to God in prayer? (John 14:13-14, 15:16, 16:23-24) \*In whose name is the Holy Spirit sent ? (John 14:26) \*Whose name and authority was invoked by the disciples in healing the sick and lame? (Acts 3:16, 4:7-10; 4:30) \*Whose name did Paul tell us to call upon?(1Cor 1:2) \*Whose name is above every name? (Eph 1:21;Phil 2:9-11)<sup>63</sup>

The answer to each of the above questions is obviously ‘Jesus Christ’ and should serve to get the attention of the fair minded Jehovah’s Witness. The above scripture references should be more than adequate to demonstrate the name by which true followers of God should be identified. Particular reference should be made to Phillipians 2:9-11, where we are told that Christ was given a name above every name; “That at the

41.

name of Jesus every knee should bow...in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” This is taken from an Old Testament passage about Yahweh. Indeed Paul an Old Testament scholar par excellence is alluding to Isaiah 45:22-24 “I am God and there is no other, by myself I have sworn my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked. Before me every knee will bow by me every tongue will swear.” Paul was drawing on his vast knowledge of the Old Testament to make the point that what is true of Yahweh is also true of Christ, the Lord of all human kind. In Acts 1:8 Jesus affirmed to the disciples; “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.” We are called to be witnesses of Jesus Christ not of Jehovah.

### iii) Jesus is not God?

The Watchtower Society says that Jesus clearly distinguished himself from God calling the Father the only true God (John 17:3). Watchtower publication “Reasoning from the Scriptures” states, “He (the Father) cannot be the only True God if there are two others who are God to the same degree as he is, can he?”<sup>64</sup> “Should you believe in the Trinity”, tells us that time and again Jesus shows us that he was a creature separate from God and that he, Jesus, had a God above him whom he worshipped and whom he called Father. In prayer to God, that is the Father, Jesus said, “You are the only true God”. (John 17:3)<sup>65</sup> Since Jesus had a God, his Father, he could not at the same time be that God. <sup>66</sup> In a “witnessing tips” article in the Christian Research Journal entitled, “Is Jesus a True or False God,” Robert Bowman suggests the following line

42.

of logic in conversing with a Jehovah’s Witness.

“Ask the question.

**Christian:** According to John 17:3 how many true Gods are there?

**J.W.:** Only one. Jehovah the Father is the only true God.

**Christian:** Quit right. Now would you agree that whatever is not true must be false.

**J.W.:** Yes, I suppose so.

**Christian:** Then if there is only one true God all other gods must be false gods, right?

**J.W.:** Yes I can see that.

**Christian:** Now according to John 1:1 in the New World Translation, Jesus is a God. Do you agree with that?

**J.W.:** Of course.

**Christian:** Well then. Is Jesus a true God or a false God?

---

<sup>63</sup> Bodine p. 3

<sup>64</sup> Reasoning from the Scriptures, p.411

<sup>65</sup> Should You Believe in the Trinity, Boston, Watchtower Book and Tract Society,1989 p. 17

<sup>66</sup> ibid p. 17.

**J.W.** hmmm! I don't know.

**Christian:** He can't be a false God can he since that would mean the Apostle John was guilty of falsely honouring Jesus as a God, therefore he must be a true God. But Jehovah is the only true God. Therefore Jesus must be Jehovah."<sup>67</sup>

Deuteronomy 6:4 and Mark 12:29, the greatest commandment, the New World Translation renders (Deut 6:4), "Listen, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah." In the New Testament when Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was he answered; 'Hear O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.'" (Mark 12:29).

Jehovah's Witnesses reason that since God is one he cannot possibly be triune at the same time. Because Jehovah is God and because there is only

43.

one Jehovah then Jesus can not possibly be God in the same sense that Jehovah is nor can the doctrine of the Trinity be true. Thousands of times in the Bible God is spoken of as a single person and when he speaks he speaks as a single undivided person.<sup>68</sup> Along these lines, "Should you Believe in the Trinity," asks,

"Why would all the God-inspired Bible writers speak of God as one person if he was actually three persons?....Surely if God was composed of three persons he would have had his Bible writers make it abundantly clear so there could be no doubt about it."<sup>69</sup>

Though there are several possible translations of Deuteronomy 6:4, I believe it is best rendered from the Hebrew text in this way; "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God the Lord alone." Using God's names we could translate this verse, "Hear O Israel, Yahweh is our Elohim, Yahweh alone." This affirmation of faith was known as the Shema among the ancient Jews. In a culture saturated with false gods and idols the Shema would have been particularly meaningful for the Israelites. The Jews made a habit of reciting this information twice a day, morning and evening. The importance of the Shema is reflected in the Hebrew practice of requiring children to memorise it at a very early age. Now while it is true that Yahweh, the Lord, is our Elohim - God, the key identification we must now make is this. Who is Yahweh? Is it the Father alone as Jehovah's Witnesses assume or is Jesus also Yahweh? Indeed is the triune God Yahweh? Scripture does not come out and say that the Father is Yahweh but we know the Father is Yahweh because he is called God and the only True God in Scripture (John 6:27 and 17:3).

**v) Jesus is Yahweh. 44.**

In the Scriptures we see that Jesus is recognised as Yahweh. He is called God, (John 1:1); Mighty God, (Isaiah 1:6. c.f. 10:21); Our great God and Saviour, (Titus 2:13), and Lord, (Romans 10:9, 1 Corinthians 12:3, Phillipians 2:11). Clearly then Jesus is Yahweh just as the Father is Yahweh. The Holy Spirit must also be recognised as Yahweh in view of his deity (see Acts 5; 1 Cor 3:16, 6:19, 2 Cor 3:17, Eph 2:22). In light of these facts we must conclude that in no way does Deuteronomy 6:4 argue against the Doctrine of the Trinity. Trinitarians gladly affirm that this verse proves that there is one and only one God and that does not contradict the idea that there are three persons in the one Godhead, a truth that is clearly revealed in other passages such as Matt 28:19 and 2 Cor 13:14. It is interesting to observe that the early Jewish converts to Christianity did not hesitate to refer to Jesus as Lord and God despite their unbending monotheism. (see Rom 10:13; 1 Thess 5:2; 1 Peter 2:3 and 3:15)<sup>70</sup>

Despite their commitment to the Shema in Deuteronomy 6:4 they had no scruple in applying to Jesus many Old Testament texts which were originally written in reference to Yahweh. For example in Revelation 1:7 Jesus is seen to be the pierced Yahweh which is described in Zechariah 12:10. The reference of Yahweh to Yahweh and Elohim in Isaiah 40:3 is seen to be fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ in Mark 1:2-4. Calling upon Yahweh in Joel 2:32 is seen as identical and parallel to calling upon Jesus in Romans 12:13. The glory of Yahweh in Isaiah 6:1-5 is said to be to the glory of Jesus in John 12:41.

---

<sup>67</sup> Is Jesus a true or False God, Bowman R., Christian Research Journal, Winter-Spring 1990 p.7

<sup>68</sup> Should you Believe in the Trinity, Boston, Watchtower book and Tract Society,1989. p. 13.

<sup>69</sup> Should you Believe in the Trinity, Boston, Watchtower book and Tract Society,1989. p. 13.

<sup>70</sup> Jesus Divine Messiah, the New Testament Witness, Reymond R.L. Phillipsburg, N.J. Presbyterian and Reformed, 1990. p. 287.

Yahweh's voice like "the roar of rushing waters" Ezekiel 43:2 is identical to Jesus voice, like "the sound of rushing waters" Rev 1:15. The description of Yahweh as an everlasting light in Isaiah 60:19-20 is seen as identical to the statement about Jesus as an

45.

everlasting light in Revelation 21:23.

#### **iv) Is Jesus the Archangel Michael?**

According to the Watchtower Society Jesus Christ is a mere angel, the first being Jehovah God created in the universe. The Watchtower magazine says there is scriptural evidence for concluding that Michael was

the name of Jesus Christ before he left Heaven and after his return.<sup>71</sup> "Indeed Michael the great prince is none other than Jesus Christ himself."<sup>72</sup> The Watchtower Society teaches that it was through this created archangel that God brought all other things into being. Michael was created first then he was used by God to create the rest of the universe. (See Colossians 1:16, New World Translation)<sup>73</sup>

Michael (Jesus) conceivably existed in his prehuman state for billions of years according to Watchtower literature. At the appointed time he was born on earth as a human being, ceasing his existence as an angel. In order to ransom human kind from sin Michael willingly gave up his existence as a spirit creature (angel) when his life force was transferred into Mary's womb by Jehovah.

This was not an incarnation (God in the flesh) rather Jesus became a perfect human being, nothing more and nothing less. He was equal in every way to Adam prior to the fall. He lived his life as a human being, fulfilled the ministry appointed to him by Jehovah and died faithfully for the ransom of humankind. At the resurrection Jesus was not physically raised from the dead as a glorified human being rather Jesus was put to death in the flesh and was resurrected an invisible spirit creature."<sup>74</sup>

The Watchtower book, Let God Be True, tells us that, "Jehovah God

46.

raised Jesus from the dead not as a human son but as a mighty immortal spirit son"<sup>75</sup> The Jehovah's Witnesses therefore, "deny that he was raised in the flesh and challenge any statement to that effect as being unscriptural."<sup>76</sup> Indeed "The man Jesus is dead, forever dead."<sup>77</sup> If this is true then what became of Jesus? According to Watchtower literature Jesus Christ resumed his identity as Michael the Archangel at the resurrection, which is obviously more of a recreation. The Watchtower book, Aid to Bible Understanding, explains that;

"By retaining the name Jesus after his resurrection (Acts 9:5) the Word shows that he is identical with the son of God on earth. He is resuming his heavenly name Michael and his title (or name). The word of God (Rev 19:13) ties him in with his prehuman existence."<sup>78</sup>

The Jehovah's Witnesses relate Christ's resurrection as a spirit creature to the doctrine of the atonement. They say Jesus gave up his human life as a ransom sacrifice for the benefit of humankind. Jesus forever gave his body as a ransom. In the Watchtower book, You Can Live

---

<sup>71</sup> The Watchtower 12.5.1969 p 302

<sup>72</sup> The Watchtower 15.12.1984 p 29

<sup>73</sup> Aid to Bible Understanding, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1971 p391

<sup>74</sup> Let God be True, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society 1952, p 200

<sup>75</sup> *ibid*, p. 40

<sup>76</sup> Studies in the Scriptures, vol 7, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1917, p. 57

<sup>77</sup> Studies in the Scriptures, vol 5, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1899, p. 454

<sup>78</sup> Aid to Bible Understanding, p.1152.

Forever in Paradise on Earth, we read; "Having given up his flesh for the life of the world Christ could never take it again and became a man once more."<sup>79</sup>

Let God be True likewise tells us that; "God did not purpose for Jesus to be humiliated thus forever by being a fleshly man forever. But after he had sacrificed his perfect manhood God raised him to deathless life as a glorious spirit creature."<sup>80</sup> In support of this the Jehovah's Witnesses often cite Hebrews 10:5 a verse in which Jesus says to God the Father;

47.

"Sacrifice and offering you did not want for you prepared a body for me." (New World Translation) Jesus also said that; "The bread that I shall give is my flesh on behalf of the life of the world. (John 6:51, New World Translation) In view of the above it follows that;

"Christ could not take his body back again in the resurrection thereby taking back the sacrifice offered to God for humankind. Besides Christ was no longer to abide on earth his home is in the heavens with his Father who is not flesh but spirit."<sup>81</sup>

But if Christ was not physically raised from the dead then what happened to his human body? There are conflicting answers to this question in Watchtower literature. In an early Watchtower publication, Studies in the Scriptures, by Pastor Russell we are told; "Whether it (the body of Jesus) was dissolved into gasses or whether it is still preserved somewhere as the grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience and of our redemption no-one knows."<sup>82</sup> Another early Watchtower publication said that Jesus' fleshly body; "Was disposed of by Jehovah God dissolved into its constituent elements or atoms."<sup>83</sup> More recently (1975) the Watchtower magazine affirmed that; "Jehovah God disposed of the sacrificed body of his son."<sup>84</sup> Likewise the Watchtower book, "Things in Which it is Impossible for God to Lie", says; "The human body of flesh which Jesus Christ laid down forever as a ransom sacrifice was disposed of by God's power."<sup>85</sup>

A related question that must be addressed is if Christ was not physically raised from the dead then how did he prove his resurrection to the

48.

disciples and his followers? Jehovah's Witnesses say that Jesus appeared or materialised to his followers in different bodies than the one that was laying in the tomb.<sup>86</sup> The Watchtowers, "Aid to Bible Understanding", tells us,

"Jesus appeared to his disciples on different occasions in various

fleshly bodies just as Angels had appeared to men of ancient times. Like those angels he had the power to construct and to disintegrate those fleshly bodies at will for the purpose of proving visibly that he had been resurrected."<sup>87</sup>

Jehovah's Witnesses claim that even today Jesus exists as a spirit creature, the Archangel Michael. He does not exist in a material, fleshly body. His resurrection was not a resurrection of material

---

<sup>79</sup> You can live forever in Paradise on Earth, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1982, p. 143

<sup>80</sup> Let God Be True p. 41

<sup>81</sup> Aid to Bible Understanding, p1396

<sup>82</sup> Studies in The Scriptures, vol 2, 1888 p. 129

<sup>83</sup> The Watchtower, 1.9.1953, p518

<sup>84</sup> The Watchtower, 1.8.1975, p479

<sup>85</sup> Things in which it is impossible for God to lie, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract society, 1965, p354

<sup>86</sup> Awake 22.7.1973, p. 4

<sup>87</sup> Aid to Bible Understanding , p.1395



flesh but rather was a recreation of the Archangel Michael. In summary:

- 1) Jesus existed for billions of years in his prehuman state as the Archangel Michael.
- 2) He gave up his spirit existence as an angel when his life force was transferred to Mary's womb by Jehovah and following his birth he lived a normal human life and was eventually crucified.
- 3) At the resurrection he was not raised from the dead in physical bodily form but rather was recreated as the Archangel Michael.

In the second half of our text on the doctrine of the trinity from a biblical perspective we shall refute these claims thoroughly.

#### **vi) Who is the Alpha and Omega?**

The Watchtower Society teaches that the New World Translation renders Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega say's Jehovah God. The one who is and was and is coming. The Almighty." Revelation 22:13

49.

also records the words; "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (New World Translation) According to Watchtower publication, Reasoning from the Scriptures, the references to Alpha and Omega in the book of Revelation deal not with Jesus Christ but with Almighty God, the Father. Among the evidences cited in support of this view are,

- 1) In Revelation 1:8 God almighty is said to be the Alpha and Omega. This is the Father. Now it is true that in the King James Version that title "is applied to one whose description thereafter shows him to be Jesus Christ."<sup>88</sup>

But the reference to Alpha and Omega in verse 11 is spurious and does not appear in most other translations.

- 2) Many translations of the Bible into Hebrew insert the name Jehovah in

Revelation 1:8 in recognition that Almighty God is being referred to.<sup>89</sup> 3) Overcoming Christians are said to be sons of the Alpha and Omega in Revelation 21:6-7. However, the relationship of spirit anointed believers to Jesus Christ is that of brothers and not sonship.<sup>90</sup> For these and other reasons then references to the Alpha and Omega in Revelation are interpreted to be God Almighty and not Jesus Christ.

In response to these reasons outlined by the Watchtower Society the Biblical Scholar can demonstrate that Jesus is indeed the Alpha and Omega and the first and the last. Demonstrating this fact is not difficult. David Reed, a former Jehovah's Witness suggests using the following line of reason using the New World Translation to demonstrate that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega.

50.

"Rev 1:7-8 says that someone is coming. Who? Verse 7 says it was someone who was "Pierced". Who was it that was pierced when he was nailed up to die? Jesus! But verse 8 says it is Jehovah God who "is coming." Could it be that there are two who are coming? No! Verse 8 refers to the "one who...is coming." Revelation 1:8 states clearly that Jehovah God is the Alpha and Omega. Now note what he says at Revelation 22:12-13. "Look I am coming quickly...I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last..." So Jehovah God is coming quickly. Notice

the response when he says it again. "Yes I am coming quickly. Amen, come Lord Jesus" (22:20 New World Translation.) Then again referring to the New World Translation, continue like this, Who is speaking in Revelation 2:8? "These are the things that he says, the first and the last who became dead and came to life again." Obviously it is Jesus who was identifying himself when he called himself the first and the last. This is how Almighty God described himself in the Old Testament. Isaiah 48:12-14"<sup>91</sup> Isaiah 44:6 records Jehovah God as saying, "... I am the first and I am the last apart from me there is no God." Again in Isaiah 48:12," I am he, I am the first, I am the last. " God said this right after his pronouncement that; " I will not yield my glory to another." (verse 11b). Christ's use of this title in Revelation 22:12-13 was undoubtedly intended to be taken as a claim to

---

<sup>88</sup> Reasoning From the Scriptures, p. 412

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Reasoning from the Scriptures, p. 412-413

<sup>91</sup> Jehovah's Witnesses Answered verse by verse. Reed D. Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1992. p. 102

be Jehovah God. No other conclusion is acceptable. In Jewish thinking a reference to the first and last letters of the alphabet (aleph, tau) was regarded to include all the intermediate letters and came to represent totality or entirety. It is with this idea in mind that the Jews with their ancient commentaries on the Old Testament said that Adam transgressed

51.

the whole law from aleph to tau. Abraham by contrast observed the whole law from aleph to tau. The Jews also believed that when God brings blessing upon Israel he does so abundantly from aleph to tau. When used of God (Christ) the first and last letters express eternity and omnipotence. Christ's claim to be the Alpha and Omega is an affirmation that he is the all powerful one of eternity past and eternity future (Jehovah God) "In describing himself as the "first and the last", Christ is relating himself to time and eternity. He is the eternal God who has always existed in the past and who will always exist in the future."<sup>92</sup> For any created being, however exalted, to claim to be the Alpha and Omega as these terms are used of Jesus Christ would be utter blasphemy.

#### **vii) The 'Holy Spirit' of the Watchtower**

According to the Watchtower Society the Holy Spirit is neither a person nor God. Rather the Holy Spirit is God's impersonal active force for accomplishing his will in the world.<sup>93</sup> Indeed as reasoning from the scriptures argues the holy spirit is; "not a person but is a powerful force that God causes to emanate from himself to accomplish his holy will."<sup>94</sup> This denial of the Holy Spirit's personality and deity is consistent with the Watchtower's denial of the doctrine of the Trinity.

The Watchtower publication, Should you believe in the Trinity says that to a certain extent the Holy Spirit can be likened to electricity. "A force that can be adapted to perform a great variety of operations."<sup>95</sup> Just as human beings use electricity to accomplish a variety of purposes so God uses the impersonal force known as the Holy Spirit to accomplish his

52.

purposes. It was this powerful force that came upon Jesus in the form of a dove at his Baptism, (Mark 1:10) "This active force of God enabled Jesus to heal the sick and raise the dead."<sup>96</sup> This same power is available to Christians and enables them to endure trials of faith and do things they could not do otherwise.<sup>97</sup> The Watchtower Society argues that proof is found in scriptures portrayal of people being filled, baptised and anointed by the Holy Spirit. These kind of expressions would be appropriate the Watchtower says only if the Holy Spirit was an active force and not a person.<sup>98</sup> After all how can one person fill thousands of other people at one and the same time. A person can not be split up in that way.

Besides if the Holy Spirit were a person it would have a name just as the Father and the Son do. We know from Scripture, the Watchtower says that the Father's personal name is Jehovah. Likewise the Son's personal name is Jesus. But nowhere in Scripture is a personal name applied to the Holy Spirit.<sup>99</sup> Therefore the Holy Spirit must not be a person like the Father and the Son.

The Watchtower society concedes that there are certain verses where the Holy Spirit is said to speak

---

<sup>92</sup> The Revelation of Jesus Christ, Walvoord, J.A., Chicago, Moody Press, 1980. p. 60

<sup>93</sup> Though not reflected in this chapter please note that Watchtower literature lower cases references to the Holy Spirit. (i.e.holy spirit) as well the definite article (the) is rarely used in such references, i.e. holy spirit not the holy spirit.

<sup>94</sup> Reasoning from the Scriptures, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1989, p. 381.

<sup>95</sup> Should you believe in the Trinity, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1989, p20.

<sup>96</sup> *ibid*, p. 21

<sup>97</sup> *ibid*

<sup>98</sup> Reasoning from the scriptures, p.380

<sup>99</sup> *ibid*, p 407

to people, therefore seeming to indicate personality. The Jehovah's Witnesses argue however that; "While some bible texts say that the Spirit speaks other texts show that this was actually done through humans or angels. (Matt 10:19-20; Acts 4:24-25; 28:25; Heb 2:2) The action of the Spirit in such instances is like that of a radio waves transmitting messages from one person to another far away."<sup>100</sup> Indeed; "God by his spirit transmits his messages and communicates his will to the minds and hearts of his servants on earth who in turn may convey that message to yet others."<sup>101</sup> 53.

Though the Holy Spirit is not a person the Watchtower Society says this active force of God is often personified in Scripture. This is not unlike other things that are personified in Scripture such as wisdom, sin and death. For example the booklet, "Should you believe in the Trinity," cites the New English Bible's rendering of Genesis 4:7. "Sin is a demon crouching at the door." This personifies sin as wicked spirit at Cain's door.<sup>102</sup> But of course; "Sin is not a Spirit person, nor does personifying the Holy Spirit make it a spirit person."<sup>103</sup> In view of these and other arguments the Watchtower Society concludes; "No, the Holy Spirit is not a person and it is not part of a Trinity. The Holy Spirit is God's active force that he uses to accomplish his will. It is not equal to God but is always at his disposition and subordinate to him."<sup>104</sup> **4. The Apostles' Testimony**

Though scripture is clear that there is only one God in the unfolding of God's revelation to human kind, it also becomes clear that there are three distinct persons who are called God. For example Peter refers to the saints; "Who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1Peter 1:2). When Jesus made a post resurrection appearance to doubting Thomas the disciple worshipfully responded by addressing him; "My Lord and My God." John 20:28. The Father also said of the Son; "Your throne, Oh God will last forever and ever." Hebrew 1:8. In Acts 5:3-4 we are told that lying to the Holy Spirit is equivalent to lying to God. Peter said, "Ananias how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and kept for yourself some of the money that

54.

you had received for the land. Didn't it belong to you before it was sold and after it was sold wasn't the money at your disposal. What made you think of doing such a thing. You have not lied to men but to God."

Besides being called God each of the three persons are seen on different occasions to possess the attributes of deity. For example, all three persons possess the attribute of omnipresence (everywhere present). The Father 1Kings 8:27, The Son, Matthew 28:20, and the Holy Spirit, Psalm 139:7. All three have the attribute of omniscience (all knowingness). The Father Psalm 147:5, The Son, John 16:30, and the Holy Spirit, 1Cor 2:10. All three have the attribute of omnipotence, (all powerful). The Father Psalm 135:6, The Son Matthew 28:18, and the Holy Spirit, Romans 15:19. Holiness is ascribed to each of these three persons. The Father, Revelation 15:4, The Son, Acts 3:14; and the Holy Spirit, Romans 1:4. Eternity is ascribed to each of these three persons. The Father, Psalm 90:2; The Son, Micah 5:2, John 1:2, Rev 1:8 and 17; The Holy Spirit Rev. 9:14. Each of the three persons is individually described as the truth. The Father John 7:28, The Son Rev. 3:7, and the Holy Spirit 1John 5:6. Each of the three is called Lord; Luke 2:11, Romans 10:12, 2Cor 3:17, everlasting Romans 16:26, Hebrews 9:14, Rev 22:13, Almighty Genesis 17:1, Romans 15:19, Revelation 1:8, and powerful Jer. 32:17, Zechariah 4:6, Hebrews 1:3.<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> Should you believe in the Trinity, p.22

<sup>101</sup> Aid to bible understanding, Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1971, p. 1543

<sup>102</sup> Should you believe in the Trinity, p.21

<sup>103</sup> ibid

<sup>104</sup> ibid p. 23

<sup>105</sup> The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge ed. Smith, J.H. Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers 1992 p.1095-1096.

## **Conclusion**

Charles Taze Russell was the founder of the pseudo-Christian religion now known as the Jehovah's Witnesses. This groups doctrine of God involves God the Father as Almighty God, Jesus the Son of God being relegated to the role of the first created being - an Incarnation of the  
55.

Archangel Michael, and the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force - God's divine energy. This view of God, which denies the doctrine of the Trinity, is another example of a relatively modern North American religion that has evolved from fertile, uneducated minds seeking to offer a simplistic monotheism.

The Bible presents a revelation of God that is in stark contrast to the teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses. In this paper we have shown that this group is an organisation that has sought to destroy the doctrine of the Trinity without the ability to offer a biblically credible alternative doctrine of God which is consistent with the whole testimony of Scripture.

## **God in the Hands of Angry Sinners. 56.**

### **Part 2. - God the Cosmic Chameleon ?**

#### **a) The New Age is here ?**

## **Introduction**

The New Age Movement presents an eclectic mixture of concepts of God and substitutes for God. In order to gain an understanding of what the New Age Movement offers humanity as a substitute for the living God and His Gospel, an overview of the New Age Movements historical roots, key ideas, and practices will occupy this chapter.

New Age conceptions of God such as a Pantheism which identify God with everything, good, bad, and indifferent, Polytheism which sees any god as one among many, and Eastern Mysticism with its quest for the divine within each person, stand in contrast to the God of the Bible. This eclectic approach to spirituality imagines God or the gods to be a 'cosmic chameleon' that changes with every new whim of spiritual fashion. Added to these anti-Christian concepts of God the New Age Movement offers a variety of substitutes for God. Healing, wisdom, guidance, spiritual rebirth, salvation, and more is offered through various techniques. An alternative 'Christ' who will come to rule the Earth is even offered as a substitute to the biblical Jesus Christ.

The term, New Age Movement, has only really emerged since the mid 1970's. Prior to this the Theosophical Society founded by Helena Blavatsky in the latter part of the 19th Century in the USA embodied many of the foundational ideas of what is now known as the New Age Movement. Madame Blavatsky, as she was known, promoted spiritism, seances and basic Hindu philosophy while manifesting a distinct antagonism to biblical  
57.

Christianity. Also prominent in the Theosophical Society was Alice Bailey who wrote over 20 books, led by a spirit guide - by telepathy. However, the Theosophical Society was not the only shop front for what we now call the New Age Movement. Religions such as, Bahaiism, Christian Science, and Rosicrucianism are also small but influential spearheads of current New Age teaching. But as we approach the next millennium perhaps the most influential aspects of the New Age Movement are Spiritualism, Astrology, Quija Boards, and UFO's. Certainly these areas are the most common vehicles for the general population to become involved in New Age beliefs and practices. Therefore, an extensive appraisal of each of these areas in the light of Scripture will be followed by a more succinct overview of the many less influential New Age ideas and practices which act as a substitute

for the God of the Bible. However, it is needful that we define what is meant by the term ‘New Age Movement’, a task that is more complicated than it may first appear.

**1. What is the New Age Movement?** The "New Age" (or “New Religions”) is the most common name used to portray the growing penetration of Eastern and occultic mysticism into Western Culture.<sup>106</sup> The term ‘New Age’ refers to the Aquarian Age, which occultists believe to be dawning, bringing with it an era of enlightenment and peace.

58.

The principle aims of the New Age Movement include:

- a. A New World Order.
- b. A New World Religion<sup>107</sup>
- c. A New Age Christ (who is neither Jesus nor “Christ”)

**a) A New World Order.**

The New Age movement is a world wide coalition of networking organisations. It also includes individuals bound together by common mystical experiences.

“World Alliance lists the 1993 number of New Religionists - followers of Asian twentieth century New Religions, New Religious Movements, radical new crisis religions, and non-Christian syncretistic mess religions, all founded since 1800 and mostly since 1945 - as follows:

Africa.....	22,000
Asia.....	121,693,000
Europe.....	50,000
Latin America.....	550,000
Northern America.....	1,439,000
Oceania (Inc. Australia).....	10,000 <sup>108</sup>
Former USSR.....	1,000

59.

World Total.....123,765,000”<sup>109</sup>

The same surveys by World Alliance in 1993 indicated that women exhibited a stronger degree of New Age belief than did men.

In 1996 there were more than 10,000 “New Age” organisations (excluding branches) within the

---

<sup>106</sup> The New Age Cult appears to be a revival of ancient occultism. It holds historical ties to Sumerian, Indian, Egyptian, Chaldean, Babylonian and Persian religious practices.

<sup>107</sup> The great English apologist and writer, C.S. Lewis saw the battle lines clearly drawn. He noted that in the final conflict between religions, Hinduism and Christianity would offer the only viable options, because Hinduism absorbs all religious systems, and Christianity excludes all others, maintaining the supremacy of the claims of Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 1:1ff)-C.S.Lewis, *God in the Dock*, p.244, W.M.B.Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1970, U.S.A.

<sup>108</sup> The 1991 Australian census revealed that 2.6% of Australians have rejected anything that even looks like traditional Western Religion, having opted for more exotic alternatives such as Islam (0.9%), with its rich Arabic cultural ties, Buddhism (0.8%), or the New Age Movement, with its eclectic approach to spirituality.

<sup>109</sup> Australian Evangel quoting Pulse, June/July 1996 ed., p.41, Published by A.O.G.- Australia.

United States and Canada alone. The number of New Age bookstores has doubled in the past five years to about 3,000 in the USA and Australia alone. More than 3,000 publishers of occult books and journals along with the sales of New Age books have turned

interest in the New Age into a “one billion dollar a year business.”<sup>110</sup> The goals of the New Age Movement and Christianity have a lot of common ground, however, they are two different ways of obtaining similar goals, e.g. A new world in which there is unity, love, peace, healing, a benevolent hierarchy, etc. New Agers believe the world has entered the Aquarian Age when peace on earth and a one World Government will rule. They see themselves as advanced in consciousness, rejecting Judeo/Christian values and the Bible in favour of Oriental philosophies and religion.

Among the ranks of the New Age Movement may be found environmentalists, nuclear-freeze proponents, Marxist-Socialist Utopians, mind-control advocates, ESP cultists, Spiritists, witchcraft practitioners, and others using magical rites. This often faddish movement packages ancient occultic practices with anti-Christian conceptions of God seeking to make them palatable to the general public. Commenting upon the lack of any genuine originality, however, in its approach to the so called ‘big

60.

(spiritual) questions of life, Time magazine stated,

“So here we are in the New Age, a combination of spirituality and superstition, fad and farce, about which only one thing is certain is that it is not new.”<sup>111</sup>

### **b) A New World Religion**

Though the beliefs and emphasis of the various groups and individuals who make up the New Age movement can vary widely they share a common religious experience and philosophical base.

Many New Age cults including Transcendental Meditation, The Rajneesh Cult, Eckankar, The Church Universal and Triumphant, and The Divine Light Mission emphasise a mystic experience. Other groups such as the Human Potential Movement exemplified in Est (or The Forum), Lifespring, Silva Mind Control, Summit workshops, etc, and many, though not all of the advocates of the various approaches to the holistic health movement, accurately represent the spirit of the New Age Movement. The modern New Age Movements leadership is personified in gurus such as the late Swami Muktananda, Sai Baba, Baba Ram Dass, Mahareeshi Mahesh Yoga, and Guru Maharajih. Members of the New Age Movement share a common belief that all is one, that is, everything that exists together composes one essential reality or substance. This ultimate reality is identified as God, usually seen as an impersonal consciousness and power. This is basically the Hindu concept of Monistic Pantheism - (Everything is God), and stands in contrast to the nature and character of a personal God as seen in the person of Jesus Christ.

61.

However, the New Age Movement has accommodated the biblical Jesus by simply adding him to their pantheon of gods, demeaning him to being a mere avatar -- a revealer of truth -- who is one “Christ” (anointed one) among many.

### **c) A New Age Christ**

The theology of the New Age movement assumes an evolutionary process. The world is waiting for more revealers of truth (avatars), such as Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, Zoroaster, Moses, Krishna and ultimately one designated as the Lord Maitreya, an incarnation of the Buddha, the Enlightened One. The Lord Jesus Christ is relegated to the role of a demi-god or one of many equally good ways. He is not considered the way, the truth, and the life, as He taught in John 14:6.

---

<sup>110</sup> Dr John Weldon and John Ankerberg in their article - “ Facts on the New Age Movement.” Charisma magazine p.15. 1989

<sup>111</sup> Time Magazine - Dec. 7., 1987 page. 62.

According to New Agers<sup>112</sup> the coming one--Lord Maitreya has already nearly arrived twice. The first time was during the mid 70's, Madame Blavasky and Annie Besant, through the Theosophical Society planned for the Lord Maitreya to appear in the person of Mrs Besant's protege, Krishna Murti. However, Krishna Murti declined the honour of Mrs Besant's anointing, due largely to the death of his brother and his subsequent disillusionment with the claims of Theosophy.<sup>113</sup> The second time was in 1982, newspapers across the world displayed full page advertisements boldly stating: "The world has had enough.....of hunger, injustice and war. There is an answer to our call for help, a world teacher for all humanity. The Christ is now here."<sup>114</sup>

62.

This advertising was sponsored by the Tara foundation under the leadership of a British Theosophy leader Benjamin Creme, and asked such interesting questions as-Who is the Christ? What is He saying? and when will we see Him? The advertisement ended in a call for peace; "Without sharing there can be no justice, without justice there can be no peace, without peace there can be no future."<sup>115</sup> Three other New Age groups joined the Tara Foundation, but the nebulous adverts inevitably failed to attract the kind of attention Creme had anticipated. The "christ" of whom the Tara Foundation was speaking was not the Christ of Biblical revelation, but an Indian guru who had flown into London. Mr Creme stated that this christ would meet the press, but the press conference was later postponed. The "christ" has never been revealed.<sup>116</sup> Despite this setback for the New Age 'christ' of Benjamin Creme the public credibility of New Age ideas suffered very little due to the widespread popularity of New Age ideas and practices among celebrities such as Shirley McLean, Merv Griffin, Linda Evans, John Denver and Sharon Gless who actively promote New Age ideas. Many talk shows on TV and radio feature New Age Psychics, Astrologers or gurus with the latest word on spiritual reality.

The most common example of the New Age Movements' penetration into Western Society is in the form of Astrology. Astrology continues to be the most popular substitute for the Good Shepherd--Jesus Christ, whom Scripture promises and countless generations of Christians have testified to as being the only truly faithful and good guide. Therefore, astrology is yet another example of an anti-Christian substitute for the living God. In the next section I will explain the main tenets of astrology and explore it's value in the light of Scripture.

## **God the Cosmic Chameleon** 63.

### **b) Astrology, Ouija Boards, Spiritism, and U.F.O.s**

#### **1. Astrology**

##### **a) Cosmic Fatalism**

Astrology is the most widely spread superstition of our time. It may be defined as the art of divining the future from the juxtaposition of the Sun, Moon and planets. A horoscope is a chart of the positions of the planets in relationship to one another at the exact time of your birth. Astrologers maintain that your personality and your future can be determined by knowing only the precise time of your birth. Your fate then, was sealed the moment you were born and nothing can change it. Astrology therefore propounds a thinly veiled fatalism.<sup>117</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> The Theosophical Society in Great Britain, according to an article in the Advertiser, 1/3/82 Ed. Adelaide, South Australia. Newscorp.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> See Benjamin Creme's book "The reappearance of the Christ", 1983, Tara Foundation, London.

<sup>117</sup> Wilburn G. The Fortune Sellers. S.U. Press, London, 1972. Ch 4.

## **b) Does Astrology Work?**

The answer to the question, does astrology work, is that astrology does sometimes work, though not for the reasons that astrology itself gives. God is in control of his universe and he has not abdicated his kingship to the stars and planets. We need to distinguish between newspaper horoscopes and the carefully prepared horoscope of an individual person. The former are sweeping generalisations and if we read our forecast for any given day, in three different newspapers, the advice given may be wildly different. Even newspaper horoscopes appear to have some success and there would seem at least two reasons for this.

### **i) Auto-suggestion**

If someone tells you that something is going to happen to you, the idea becomes planted in your subconscious mind. Once the suggestion is firmly

64.

rooted in the mind its prediction often comes true because you allow it to do so.

### **ii) Demonic influence**

In becoming involved in astrology we may place ourselves under the influence of the powers of darkness. Kurt Koch relates the story of a Christian Minister who became involved in astrology for the purpose of disproving it, but found to his surprise the predictions coming true. Eventually he realised he had sinned and had placed himself under the powers of Satan. He repented and found that his horoscope was no longer correct.<sup>118</sup>

In the case of an individually prepared horoscope, a third factor may be involved.

### **iii) The Mediumistic abilities of the astrologer**

During a private interview, the astrologer may employ methods similar to a spiritist medium and prepare a detailed horoscope under the influence of demonic spirits. If the astrologer himself is deeply enslaved by the occult, this may even occur without his conscious knowledge.

## **c) A Biblical Response to Astrology.**

The clearest and most powerful argument against astrology (apart from those already given) is that astrology places God's creation before God. astrology is related to idolatry and therefore to demonology. God warns against astrology because of the dangers involved. We are not to worship the sun or the moon (Deut 17:2-5), we should not; "be dismayed at the signs of the heavens." (Jer 10:2) Astrology cannot save us any more than it was able to save the Babylonians. God speaking through Isaiah exposes the uselessness of Babylonian Astrology, "Let them come forward

65.

now and save you, those who analyse the heavens, who study the stars and announce month by month what will happen next...They will not save their lives from the power of the flame." (Is 47:13-14)

A choice must be made. Man may follow astrology or the God who created the sun, moon and stars. The Bible is clear that the Creator is to be consulted and worshipped rather than his creation. The Christian does not need astrology to guide him, his future is in the hands of God. However, some Christians have endorsed astrology on the basis it is seen as playing a part in guiding the wise men from the East to Christ at His birth.

### **i) The question of Astrology in connection with the birth of Christ.**

What about the wise men from the East that we read about in Matthew. Were they not astrologers? The answer must be yes, but we claim that this was an isolated incident which does not support the use of astrology today. The following theory I put forward as a possible solution to this problem.

The underlying assumption of astrology is the unity of the cosmos, and such a description could well apply to the unfallen cosmos. However, as a result of man's disobedience the perfect relationship between man and the cosmos was fractured and now "the whole world has been groaning in travail waiting to be set free (Rom 8:22-23). This does not mean that every trace of harmony has disappeared but it does mean that the monkey wrench of sin has been thrown into the cosmic machinery. Since Christ is the Second Adam, and His coming into the world was like the reintroduction of a bit of Eden into the fallen creation, we might expect to see at His birth a clear illustration of the underlying unity of man and the cosmos. Is this perhaps why the stars led those

---

<sup>118</sup> Koch K. Between Christ and Satan. Kregal, Grand Rapids, 1962. pp. 11-18.



Persian astrologers to him?

Whatever we may say about this story we clearly no longer have any need to search the heavens for information concerning the birth of "the king of the Jews." (Matt 2:1-12)

**d) Conclusion: Jesus Christ the all Sufficient Guide.** 66. The birth of Jesus Christ, the incarnation of God himself in human flesh, is an accomplished fact. God's ultimate revelation of himself has happened. He has given us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." (2 Cor 4:6) He is now our Good Shepherd, and through His Word (Wisdom) and by His Spirit (Revelation) we are shown our identity, purpose, and way in life. To rely upon a source of guidance for your life's direction (astrology) that was not directly prescribed or utilised by Christ or His Apostles is to entertain a dangerous and or useless practice. All the information which we require to come into a relationship with the living God has been provided for us. (2 Peter 1:3) Astrology is totally unnecessary and if practised will certainly direct our thoughts away from God and therefore weaken our faith.

Apart from Astrology the New Age practice of Quija Boards is yet another example of a substitute that modern man has turned to for guidance and wisdom for living in preference to the Living God. A brief explanation of this New Age practice follows.

## 2. The Ouija Board.

The Ouija Board<sup>119</sup> is perhaps the most widely used device for spirit contact. Devices similar to the Ouija Board were known to the Egyptians and other ancient peoples. The invention of the Ouija Board in 1889 (patented in 1892) is Credited to William Fuld of Baltimore, Maryland. With minor variations, it is a flat board with the letters of the alphabet and a 'yes' and 'no' circle. In using the Ouija Board, the two participants sit facing each other with their knees touching and the board resting in their

67.

laps. With their eyes shut and fingertips resting on a triangular indicator, the participants attempt to empty themselves so that the indicator will move over the letters to spell out a message from the spirit world.

Many people have progressed from the Quija Board to attending meetings of the Spiritualist Church which is yet another shop front for the New Age Movement to pedal its substitute of fellowship with 'spirits from the other side', rather than the Holy Spirit of God who can lead us into all Truth (Jn.16:1ff).

The background of Spiritualism as it has developed in modern times and its validity as a means of contacting the dead will be evaluated in the light of the Bible. Spiritualism will be seen as an unnecessary and redundant means of making contact with the spirit realm, Jesus Christ being the only true mediator between us and the spiritual realm.

## 3. Spiritualism.

### a) Historical background.

Spiritualism (often more accurately called Spiritism) may be simply defined as the practice of contacting the (evil) spirit world. Spiritualism is an attempt to communicate with what are presumed to be the spirits of the dead. Though the beginnings of the movement are lost in antiquity the rise of modern Spiritualism dates from 1848 in the psychic experiences of Margaret and Katherine Fox, in Hydesville, New York.

In March of 1848, sounds of knocking and furniture being moved were heard on many occasions. Finally, Katherine challenged the unseen power to repeat the snaps of her fingers. The challenge was accepted and each snap was answered instantly by a knock. A contact with the unseen world had been established and the news spread around the village and further

68.

afield. Many people became interested in the strange phenomena taking place at the home of the

---

<sup>119</sup> The name 'quija' comes from the French and German words for "yes".

Fox family. The girls became practised mediums<sup>120</sup> and for thirty years produced remarkable phenomena.

It is recorded that the first message received through the Fox sisters was as follows,

"Dear friends...you must proclaim these truths to the world. This is the dawning of a new era and you must not try to conceal it any longer. when you do your duty God will protect you and good spirits will watch over you."<sup>121</sup>

Margaret and Catherine Fox devoted all their energy to the propagation of Spiritualism, but the promised protection did not materialise and eventually they took to drink.

In time they became alcoholics. Nothing could satisfy their craving for alcohol and they lost all sense of moral responsibility. Margaret, in the presence of her sister, Katherine, at an anti-Spiritualist meeting in 1888 declared "I am here tonight as one of the founders of Spiritualism, to denounce it as an absolute falsehood ... the most wicked blasphemy the world has ever known."<sup>122</sup>

Both women died as a result of drink and cursed God as they died.

### **b) Is Spiritualism a Religion?**

Spiritualism is not simply a practice but must be characterised as a religion, though there are always those who disclaim any connection with the Spiritualist Church or with any other Spiritualist organisation. For example, The Spiritualists' National Union, whose headquarters are in Manchester, England, does not claim to be Christian and all associated

69.

churches (so-called) must approve the following seven principles,

- a) The Fatherhood of God
- b) The Brotherhood of man
- c) The communion of Saints and the ministry of angels
- d) Human survival of physical death
- e) Personal responsibility to answer for one's own sins
- f) Compensation or retribution for good or evil deeds
- g) Eternal progress of every soul <sup>123</sup>

Jesus' life and death are looked upon as an example only. Notice that the central event of Christianity (and indeed of all history), the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on the Cross, does not rate a mention. On the other hand, The Greater World Christian Spiritualist League claims to be an organisation of Christian churches and yet includes the following statements in their platform of belief:

"(a) I believe that all forms of life created by God intermingle, are interdependent and **evolve** until perfection is attained. (emphasis mine)

(b) I believe that sins committed can only be rectified by the sinner himself or herself, through the redemptive power of Jesus Christ, by repentance and service to others."<sup>124</sup>

In a fuller explanation of these clauses (and the seven others not mentioned) which can be found in their booklet "Belief and Pledge of the G.W.C.S.L." it can be seen that the fall of man is denied and the mention of Satan and his host of fallen angels is carefully avoided. In fact an assertion is made, in these explanatory notes, that animals have the same eternal

70.

souls as human beings and that the finished work of Christ is not considered sufficient to redeem man but salvation depends also upon our good works.

---

<sup>120</sup> A medium is one who mediates between the spirit world and the world of men.

<sup>121</sup> Koch Kurt, *Occult Bondage and Deliverance*, p. 40 - 42., Kregal, Grand Rapids, 1969.

<sup>122</sup>. Koch Kurt, *The Devils Alphabet*, p. 106 - 107, Kregal, Grand Rapids, 1969

<sup>123</sup> The Greater World Christian Spiritualist League, "Belief and Pledge of the G.W.C.S.L." p.14. 1976, London, U.K.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid. p.14.

### **c) The Practice of Mediumship**

The key word in mediumism is passivity. Every person is considered to have a spirit guide, whether or not they ever become conscious of their present guiding or not. To become a medium means to allow the spirit guide to take control of the body or mind, hence it becomes a 'familiar'<sup>125</sup> spirit giving guidance and advice to the medium. When other spirits wish to use the medium to pass on messages, the guide either introduces the new spirit to the assembled company (through the voice of the medium) or else merely describes them and passes on their message. The spiritualist is quite adamant that these spirits are deceased people. However, when we examine the situation from a Christian perspective the evidence strongly supports the view that it is not possible to contact the dead. We must firstly understand that the Bible clearly forbids any attempt to contact the dead. God cautioned the Israelites, "There must never be anyone among you who consults ghosts or spirits or calls up the dead." (Deut. 18:10-11 JB.). "Do not turn to mediums do not seek them out to be defiled by them." (Lev. 19:31 R.S.V.)

"So why are you trying to find out the future by consulting witches and mediums? Don't listen to their whisperings and mutterings. Can the living find out the future from the dead? Why not ask your God?" (Is. 8:19 L.B. Paraphrase). The Old Testament bans any attempt to contact the departed and there is not the slightest sign that the New Testament lifts the ban.

71.

If the early Christians practised mediumship, Paul would surely have appealed to the communication which the living Christians could have with the departed in his writings. As it is, he comforts the mourners by reminding them that their relatives are in Christ and that the proof of their survival and subsequent resurrection is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (See - I Thess.4:3-18; I Cor.15:17-19). The possibility of contacting the dead will be now considered in the context of two groups of people - those who were (are) Christians and those who were not (are not) Christians.

#### **i) Departed Christians**

By definition departed Christians would be good spirits, removed not only from the condemnation of sin but also from the presence of sin. However, to claim that it is possible to contact good spirits via mediums is a contradiction in itself. Good spirits know and recognise the laws of God and would refuse to trespass beyond the limits set for them.

For a Christian to be "absent from the body" is to be "present with the Lord." (I Cor. 5:8 K.J.V.) This presence with the Lord is in marked contrast with the communications that come through mediums, in which God and Christ are incidentals, if they are mentioned at all. These communicators seem to have missed the Christian sphere since they now often attack the Christian faith.

Our third point overlaps the second and confirms our suspicions that the evil spirits involved are not good spirits. Quite clearly the content of a spirits teaching exposes their origins. Edna Twigg, a British medium whom the liberal theologian Bishop James Pike consulted, gave him the following message from his "son". "Don't ever believe that God can be personalised. He is the Central Force." "As for Jesus," he declared, "They talk about him - a mystic, a seer - yes, a seer. Oh, but Dad, they don't talk about him as Saviour."<sup>126</sup>

Finally we mention the argument from silence which we have already examined above. We have ascertained that the spirits contacted are not good spirits and thus not the spirits of departed Christians but the possibility still exists that the spirits of departed non-Christians could still be contacted.

#### **ii) Departed non-Christians**

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31, both die and find themselves in Hades and Abraham's bosom respectively. A great chasm is fixed between the two and the rich man, who is in torment, pleads with Abraham to send Lazarus to go and warn his five brothers of the need for repentance. The fact that he asks Abraham to send Lazarus suggests strongly that it is no more possible to go back and warn his brothers than it is to bridge the gap between Hades and Abraham's bosom. We also find Lazarus is not allowed to go and, in fact, had he gone it would not have had the required effect. "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead." (Luke 15:31 R.S.V.)

---

<sup>125</sup> Familiar, comes from the Latin and means 'servant'

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. p.48.

Our conclusion then, is that it is not possible to contact the dead and therefore we are forced to deduce that evil spirits impersonate the spirits of deceased people. However, there are two passages in the Bible which at first appear to support the Spiritualists claim that we can have direct contact with the deceased.

#### **d) Two Problem Passages in the Bible**

There are two Biblical passages which have often been used by Spiritualists to support the idea that we can have direct contact with departed souls.

The first is the story of King Saul and the medium of Endor in which he seeks information from the spirit of Samuel. When a spirit materializes Saul concludes that it is Samuel. The question is - was it the real Samuel or an evil spirit imitating Samuel? (See I Sam. 28)

The latter conclusion is claimed to be the correct one. It is clear from the story that Saul did not actually see Samuel and the description of an old man coming up wrapped in a robe is vague to say the least. The prediction relayed by the spirit impersonating Samuel in no way necessitated God's involvement. A prophecy of impending disaster was only logical in the light of the circumstances. Whatever our interpretation, the incident cannot be used to support Spiritualism, for in Chronicles we read, "So Saul died for his unfaithfulness ..... he did not keep the Commandment of the Lord, and also consulted a medium seeking guidance and did not seek guidance from the Lord." (I Chron. 10:13 R.S.V.)

The second problem passage is the story of the Transfiguration in Matthew 17:1-13. Since this incident was a vision (Matt. 17:9), we certainly cannot conclude that the Transfiguration was an open-air seance. Also there is certainly no encouragement for us to secure its repetition, in Matthew or in the rest of the New Testament. (of Col. 2:18). However, it could be argued that the value of Spiritualism is found in the apparent accuracy of the information given by these so called evil spirits. If these spirits are satanic then why do they not always lie, and how can they know so much?

#### **e) How do Evil Spirits Know so Much?**

In Rev. 12:9--10 we read that Satan is the "accuser of our brethren ..... who accuses them day and night before our God." (R.S.V.) In order for Satan to accuse Christians before God day and night he would have to have knowledge of our sins and failures. Of course Christians do not need to fear his accusations since, "if anyone does sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous." (I John 2:1 R.S.V.) If then, Satan, by some means which we do not understand, has records of our deeds and thoughts with which he could accuse us before God, then it seems reasonable that evil spirits have access to such records. As with false prophets, their record is never perfect. (See Ezekiel 20:32, Prov. 19:21)

#### **f) Conclusion: Spiritualism - the Redundant Religion.**

Perhaps the strongest argument against Spiritualism is simply that it is redundant and unnecessary. Through prayer Christians reach into the very presence of God, therefore there is no need for spirit intermediaries. (See Rev. 5:8, Ps. 141:2). Christians can deal directly with God through the only mediator, Jesus Christ. (See I Tim. 2:5). Increasingly however, the prospect of having a mediator from another dimension in the form of benevolent aliens coming to us in spacecraft that display new and amazing technologies has become more exciting to many people. Jesus Christ, who is able to put us into communion with the true Master of the Universe--our Father God, appears to many Australians as an unexciting historical sage shrouded in the mists of time compared with the mysterious yet often

75.

sighted U.F.O.'s. But are UFO's a technological or Occult (spiritual) phenomena? This question must be answered by the Christian Church because U.F.O.'s are increasingly gaining popularity as a substitute means of possible salvation from the threats of global warming, over-population, new viral diseases, and depleted food resources. U.F.O.'s represent an alternative Gospel and are being promoted by many New Ager's as our best hope for the future of our race. Once again we see how New Age ideas can become a direct substitute for faith in the Living God of the Bible.

## 4. UFO's - Technological or Occult Phenomena ?

a) Historical Perspective.

Ufology is a recently coined word meaning "the study of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO's)". Theories on their nature and origin abound, and continue to proliferate daily, but the phenomenon is a fiendishly elusive one, and no one has yet "proved" anything whatsoever about them except in a general sense, that they "exist".

An historical survey reveals that reports of strange objects in the skies are laced through documents of the ancient and recent past. Interestingly, the records seem to indicate that UFO's have adapted themselves to the cultural setting and the technological capacities of the observers. American Indian mythology describes "baskets that come down from the sky" and in the 19th Century UFO's resembling craft from Jules Verne's contemporaneous science fiction appeared over Chicago and San Francisco.<sup>127</sup>

76.

The flight characteristics of recently reported UFO's are incredible. For example, right-angle turns at velocities of several thousand kilometres per hour. Many competent researchers have thus concluded that it is impossible to interpret UFO's in terms of material spaceships.<sup>128</sup>

John Keel, one of the most respected researchers in this field noted that,

"over and over again, witnesses have told me in hushed tones 'You know, I don't think that thing I saw was mechanical at all. I got the distinct impression that it was alive' "<sup>129</sup>

Research into this phenomena leaves one with as many questions as answers, however, I wish to present several hypothesis to answer our question as to the nature and origin of UFO's, are they a technological or occult phenomena?

Today we see within the New Age Movement a popularisation of UFO's and in particular an interest in abduction cases, where often credible people have given accounts of being abducted by alien creatures in UFO's, usually for the dual purpose of having medical experiments carried out on them, and to be given various messages for humanity. It appears that the messages given are without exception promoting a doctrine of God which is blatant Pantheism. This fact alone makes the Christian question the spiritual forces behind this phenomena.

### **b) The *extra-terrestrial* hypothesis.**

This is the classical theory that UFO's are extra-terrestrial visitors from other planets or galaxies necessarily from a far more advanced civilisation; technologically, and perhaps morally, speaking. The Bible does not preclude the existence of such people but I will seek to demonstrate that this theory does not fit the known facts as well as others. To begin with,

77.

God is sovereign over all creation. If there are other strains of His children in the universe, they are either unfallen or fallen, in conscious submission to him or in rebellion. Let us look at the possibilities.

1) These aliens are unfallen extra-terrestrials.

Some compelling questions must be posed at this juncture.

i) Would God allow such unfallen people to have commerce with a world in Satan's powers, such as our own?

ii) If they did come it would presumably be to help us, but the biblical record of God's communication seems to make this possibility redundant. The actual cases of reported contact suggest that they are anything but unfallen. Abduction, psychological and psychic manipulation, violence, sexual assault,

---

<sup>127</sup> Weldon, J., UFO's: What on Earth Is Happening, N.Y. Bantam Books, 1989, p.14. The most comprehensive treatment available from a biblical perspective.

<sup>128</sup> Keel, J., UFO's Operation Trojan Horse, London, Abacus, 1973. p. 41-53, Written from a non-Christian point of view, but required reading if researching in this area.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. p. 53.

and physical attack are not uncommon features of UFO contact.<sup>130</sup>

2) These aliens are fallen extra terrestrials.

There are inherent problems with this idea also. For example;

i) Because of sin there is an inherent "pollution factor" which turns even our "successes" against us. Is it not too much to assume that a fallen race elsewhere in the universe would have been placed under the restrictions of a similar "balance of disaster" for the same reason. To achieve the capacity for deep space travel they would have to avoid self-destruction for a prolonged time.

ii) Statistically, it is improbable that a fallen race would ever get to our planet from another solar system, even with ten million advanced civilisations existing elsewhere in the universe.<sup>131</sup>

iii) The messages they bring are not what we would expect. They convey

78.

information which is far more at home in a spiritualist meeting than in the technologically advanced culture they are supposed to have come from.<sup>132</sup>

iv) In addition, the beings, while they appear at times "physical", likewise display characteristics equally attributable to "spiritual" entities. In fact, their appearance is more often than not akin to the "materialisation" which occurs at seances.

### **c) The *extra dimensional* hypothesis.**

This hypothesis claims that UFO's are the result of the direct intrusion of spirit beings into the material realm.

It is claimed, therefore, that UFO's do represent a visitation but of extra-dimensionals - demonic spirits which have gained the power to actually perform materialisations in the physical realm. That is they are an occult phenomena, not a technological one.

Arguments for this hypothesis are,

1) The nature of "contact cases" often involves meetings where telepathic (rather than verbal) communication is present. The message communicated by the aliens usually combines familiar science fiction motifs (e.g. earth in danger of destroying itself ) with less easily identifiable elements of occult mysticism, (e.g. all is one, concepts of enlightenment and cosmic evolution, psychic manifestations etc. ). Cases of outright "abduction" contain the highest proportion of overt occult content.

One such abductee is Brian Scott of the USA. As a result of his experiences, he regularly enters spontaneous trance states in which he produces automatic writing and automatic drawings. Brian Scott has no peace, at virtually any moment the "intelligences" may intervene in his life to plague him with reams of mathematical data, star maps and

79.

complicated designs for futuristic machines.<sup>133</sup>

The most famous contactee is Uri Geller. He claims to receive his power from extra terrestrials who first contacted him in an Arab's garden when he was a child. He claims to be in contact with "The Nine", a group of extra terrestrials from the planet Hoovar. They claim to be God - "God is nobody else than we together, the Nine Principles of God"<sup>134</sup>

Popular U.S. Psychic, Jeane Dixon also claims to have contacted a number of extra terrestrials.

2) The "new science" which these extra terrestrials have come to teach the people on earth (e.g. teleportation, transmutation of matter, the implantation of feelings and experiences into people's minds) is nothing

else but the old occult in new clothes. The reports indicate that the closer we get to UFO's ("Close

---

<sup>130</sup> Weldon, J., UFO's: What on Earth Is Happening, N.Y. Bantam Books, 1989, p.89.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. p.95.

<sup>132</sup> See Uri Gellers testimony - next page of this paper.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. p.92.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. p. 57.

Encounters of the Third Kind") the stranger and more occult our experiences become.<sup>135</sup>

3) Intersecting dimensions - Perhaps the strange behaviour of UFO's can be explained by the passing through of our "three-dimensional world" by demonic agencies who exist in a 'higher dimensional world'. Imagine a world of two dimensions only. In this world, Flatland, we can see what effect a three dimensional object would have as it passed through these 'Flatlands'.<sup>136</sup> The more complicated the object the more incomprehensible the phenomena becomes to the 'Flatlanders'.

**d) Conclusion: The purpose of UFO's**

If they are indeed occultic then the purpose of UFO's must be to disorganise God's kingdom and to organise Satan's. One respected researcher, Jacques Vallee, has conjectured the following,  
80.

"I suggest that it is human belief that is being controlled and conditioned...UFO's are the means through which man's concepts are being rearranged."<sup>137</sup>

This conjecture matches up quite well with a Christian understanding of Satan and his kingdom as seen in 2 Thess. 2:9-10, 15,

"The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan will be with all kinds of counterfeit miracles and with pretended signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved...so then brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us."

U.F.O.'s are an occultic substitute for the living God popularised in television series (such as the X-Files), and portrayed as our best hope for an injection of wisdom and technology that may yet save our race from destruction.

## God the Cosmic Chameleon

**c) A Summary of New Age Substitutes for God** New Age substitutes for God abound in our day. Whilst the possibility of salvation brought by aliens brings hope to some, many still feel the need to find remedies to deal with the present realities of emotional, physical, and existential pain. Christians can identify the attributes of their God being substituted by other things within the New Age movement.

81.

In summary we can see New Age ideas and practices are being offered as direct substitutes for the God of the Bible in the following areas,

**a) Healing** through the power of,

i) Crystals, which New Age advocates believe contain incredible healing and energising powers. Crystals are often touted as being able to restore the "flow of energy" in the human body.

ii) Psychic Healing is the supposed curing of mental or physical illness through cosmic energy emanating from the hands of a psychic healer.

iii) Holistic Health, which sees the body as an inter-related organism. Its goal is to treat the whole person (body, mind and spirit) as opposed to merely treating a particular sickness. Surely only the true Christian Gospel can provide the context for true wholeness and holiness.

iv) Visualisation, a practice also known as guided imagery, visualisation basically refers "mind over matter". It involves the attempt to bring about change in the material realm by the power of the mind.

**b) Wisdom** is sought by New Agers through such means as,

i) Graphology -- Character analysis and foretelling based on handwriting.

---

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. p. 49.

<sup>136</sup> Abbott. Edwin, Flatland,N.Y. 1972.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. p.42.

- ii) Channelling -- A New Age form of mediumship or spiritism.
- iii) Automatic writing -- Writing produced without the conscious thought of the recipient. A written message given through a spirit guide with a pencil or typewriter.
- iv) Clairvoyance, the ability to see mentally without using the eyes, beyond ordinary time and space limits; also called "Second Sight."
- v) Tarot Cards, a deck of seventy eight cards that supposedly reveal the secrets of man and the universe.
- vi) quija Boards, a means of communicating with the dead (as explained in detail).

82.

- vii) Spiritism, making contact with the dead (as explained in detail).
- viii) Astral Flight, soul travel occurring particularly during sleep or deep meditation.

**c) Fellowship and Unity** is sought through,

- i) A One World Order, otherwise called Globalism or Networking. "One Worlders" want to abolish the concept of separate nations and create a single-world government, similar in structure to the present United Nations. The Unity-in-Diversity Council combines 100 networks and groups rallying for global co-operation and interdependence. The Club of Rome is tied in with this organisation.
- ii) 'The Plan', a phrase that occurs often in the writings of Alice Bailey. It refers to specific preparations in the world for a New Age Christ. These preparations are carried out by the "Masters of the Hierarchy" a group of exalted beings who supposedly guide the spiritual evolution of the people on earth. Though this teaching of 'The Plan' does actually exist, the term has been sensationalised by some Christian writers. These writers have mistakenly hypothesised that New Agers are completely unified in a behind-the-scenes manipulation of world events in order to conquer the world for its true god, Lucifer.<sup>138</sup>
- iii) Cosmic Consciousness, in keeping with Hindu concepts, some New Agers believe in having a cosmic consciousness which is a spiritual and mystical perception that all in the universe is "one." To attain cosmic consciousness, which can supposedly be gained through "initiations" like yoga, meditation and various psycho technologies, you see the universe as God and God as the universe.
- iv) Cosmic humanism, standing in contrast to normative humanism that sees man as the measure of all things, cosmic humanism sees man as

83.

having virtually unlimited potential because of his inner divinity. New Agers often talk about the Inner or Higher Self, the inner divine nature possessed by all human beings.

- v) Meditation and Yoga, a supposed means of becoming united with the supreme being, or with the universal soul.
- vi) Harmonic Convergence, is an assembly of New Age meditators gathered at the same astrological time in different locations to usher in peace on earth and one world government. This act is supposed to produce the ultimate unity for humanity, or to use the New Age term, attunement.

**d) Eternal Life** is sought by New Ager's through,

- i) An Age of Aquarius - Astrologers believe that evolution goes through cycles corresponding to the signs of the zodiac, each lasting 2,000-2,400 years. New Age advocates say we are now moving from the cycle associated with Pisces into the one associated with Aquarius. The Aquarian Age will supposedly be characterised by a heightened degree of spiritual or cosmic consciousness. Each New Age is ushered in by an avatar, a "christ" - 2,000 years ago it was Jesus Christ, prior to that, Buddha and so on.<sup>139</sup>
- ii) Reincarnation, which refers to the cyclical evolution of a person's soul as it repeatedly passes from one body to another at death. It is believed that the process continues until the soul reaches a state of perfection. This idea comes directly from Hinduism.

It must not be assumed that all of these practices are carried out by all New Agers. This list of ideas

---

<sup>138</sup> Ibid. p. 149.

<sup>139</sup> J. Ankerberg & J. Weldon, Encyclopaedia of New Age Beliefs, p.53ff, Harvest House, Grand Rapids, Oregon,1996.



and practices are by no means exhaustive.<sup>140</sup>

However, what is clear is that the popularisation of these ideas provides many people today with a wide array of attractive options to add some spiritual dimension to their lives. Completely bypassing the Christian

84.

Church these New Age ideas and practices offer the modern spiritual consumer a sense of control over their spirituality which the Christian Gospel can never offer. The God of the Bible is altogether too unpredictable, too uncontrollable, and is generally not very 'consumer friendly'. Most Australians today would gladly have Jesus Christ amongst their personal pantheon of gods if he were not so exclusive, so self-centred, and so demanding. Christians know however, the true love, joy, and eternal peace which the New Age movements substitutes for God can never offer. Spiritual reality is found only through Jesus Christ - the way, the truth, and the life.

### **Conclusion: The 'New Age' a Sign of the End of the Age !**

In dealing with the New Age Cult we are in reality dealing with spiritual warfare against the forces of darkness and we are told by God to put on the whole armour of God, so that we will be able to withstand the forces of Satan (Eph 6:11)

There can be little doubt that the Aquarian Conspiracy, the rise of the New Age Cult and the Bible have one common denominator. The Bible prophesies that at the end of the age, false prophets, 'christs' and teachers will proliferate (Matt 24), proclaiming "here is the Christ, there he is" (Luke 21). In the words of the living Christ, "This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:21)

## **God in the Hand's of Redeemed Sinners.** <sup>85.</sup>

### **Part 1.- Gods Self-Revelation to Man in History**

#### **Introduction**

A central tenant of the historic Christian faith, and indeed Classical Theism, is the notion that we cannot know God apart from His self revelation to us. This self revelation has come primarily through two mediums, 1. The Bible - God's Word, 2. Jesus Christ - the Word made flesh. Some would argue that these are insufficient tools by which we can know God's nature and character, and therefore we must add to these, new revelations, mere human reason, or even the religious writings of other religions. However, the written revelation of the Bible and the incarnation of God in Christ, clearly spell out the the nature and character of God.

'Trinity' then, is the term which expresses the unity of three persons in the One God. The Christian doctrine simply stated is, 1) That there is only one God, one divine nature and being, 2) This one divine being is tri-personal, involving the distinctions of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, 3) These three are joint partakers of the same nature and majesty of God.

This definition stands in contrast to the various heresies concerning the Trinity that have emerged as the Church has wrestled with this doctrine. In fairness to those early Christians who strayed into error on this doctrine, it must be said that they were often wrestling with their allegiance to a strict monotheism.

86.

A brief historical survey of the development of the doctrine of the Trinity follows, and will serve to correct the errors of those views of God previously presented in this work. We shall discover that God's true nature and character can be ascertained from the Biblical revelation in the hands of redeemed sinners!

---

<sup>140</sup> Ibid. p.321.

## **a) The Doctrine of the Trinity in Church History**

### **i) The Early Church**

“The Eternal Being reveals Himself in His triune existence even more richly and vitally than in His attributes. It is in this holy trinity that each attribute of His Being comes into its own, so to speak, gets its fullest content, and takes on its profoundest meaning. It is only when we contemplate this trinity that we know who and what God is.”<sup>141</sup>

“ I cannot think on the one without quickly being encircled by the splendour of the three: nor can I discern the three without being strait-way carried back to the one.”<sup>142</sup>

“We do better to adore the mysteries of Deity than to investigate them.”<sup>143</sup>

87.

The Athanasian Creed (or Quicunque Vult: late fourth or fifth century?) states that 'the Catholic Faith is this: 'That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance.' This affirmation concerning the truth that in the unity of God there is a trinity of persons, is known only by revelation, and issues in worship. Such an affirmation was not derived from the Church Fathers, but from the Scriptures as the written form of God's Word, and apostolic teaching. The Early Church Fathers sought to express in contemporary language and terms the revealed realities of the Christian faith, yet were hampered by the deficient categories, grammar and vocabulary of their language to adequately convey such truth.

While Jews bear witness to the revelation of the unity of God, the covenant LORD ( in the Shema - Deut. 6:4ff.) the early Christians also confessed the Christ to be 'Lord and God'. They distinguished between the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and also acknowledged the Spirit as God: they came to perceive that the God of the Old Testament and the Father of the New, together with the Son, are one and the same God. Coming to affirm the incarnation of God the Son as Jesus Christ, the early Church was soon forced to articulate its understanding of the Trinity. So, the formulation of the revelation concerning of the Trinity, as such, was dependent on the Church's views of the incarnation. Depending on whether Jesus is accepted as the incarnation of God the eternal Son, or simply a human being divinely equipped and energised for ministry (Adoptionism), or even the human form of a created or derived existence (Subordinationism, Arias), views of the Trinity were considered, rejected, or overhauled.

88.

Within all of the debates, derision and decisions issuing in the Creeds of the Church, variant views of the incarnation compromised or contributed to a clear articulation of the Trinity. Along the broad spectrum different groups stressed the unity of God (and thereby exclusive of any internal relations), while others the internal multiplicity of God (and the complexity of relations): the constant and twin dangers of Unitarianism (also positions of Sabellius, the Subordinationists and all strict monotheists) and tritheism confronted the Church.

Athanasius rejected Arias' view that the Son was not of the same substance as the Father (Arias argued that the Son was created as Logos from the non-existent), but affirming that the Son was homoousios with the Father. His statement meant that the Church could articulate its belief in one God, yet with the Son having the same (not merely similar, or like) substance as the Father. In fact, he argued that only if Christ is truly God become man can and do humanity have any (ontological) contact with God. That is, within the full humanity of Christ, we have the incarnation of God the

---

<sup>141</sup> Herman Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith* (Baker: 1977), p. 143. See also D. Broughton Knox, 'The doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of the Christian religion. Unless this doctrine is held firmly and truly, it is not possible to be a Christian'. In *The Everlasting God* (Evangelical Press: 1982), p. 49.

<sup>142</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus, *On Holy Baptism*, oration xl. 41 A SELECT LIBRARY OF THE NICENE AND POST-NICENE FATHERS, first series.

<sup>143</sup> Melanchthon, in the Introduction to the *Loci*, Library of Christian Classics, XIX, (SCM: 1953ff.), page 21.

Son, who freely incorporates fallen humanity into the very communion of the Godhead. Most of the early Church Fathers discussions on the doctrine of God concentrated on the Father and the Son, since up to this time the question of the Spirit had not been considered as critical, although various divergent views had been expressed. In the Eastern Church, the fourth century Cappadocians (chief among them was Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus) followed the insights of Athanasius, and defended the three full hypostaseis of the persons of the Godhead.

89.

This meant that they maintained the full homoousios of the Spirit, with that of the Father and Son. Yet the East did part company with the Western Church over the filioque clause, that is, that the Spirit proceeds from the Father, and the Son, the Western Church's final formulation was expressed in Augustine's work, *De Trinitate*. He emphasises the unity of essence and the trinity of persons, each of whom possesses the entire essence, and thus is identical with the other two persons. None of the persons may be considered in isolation from the others, since they relate by mutual dependence on the others, with interpenetration and indwelling. Like his forebears, Augustine had misgivings about the term for 'person', but felt obliged to use it rather than remain mute.

#### **ii) The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Reformation**

"It is made a reproach to the framers of [Reformation creeds] that they simply stood in the paths of the earlier decision on the Trinity and the Person of Christ, and did not attempt a reconstruction of these doctrines .... In the first place, they required these doctrines as the foundation of their own evangelical faith . . . [then] accepted them from a clear perception that they were Scriptural and true . . . if they clung to these ecumenical doctrines of the Son and Spirit, it was because they . . . clearly perceived that the Scripture taught them." <sup>144</sup>

#### **a) The Historical Context for the Reformation**

The aim of the following section is to concentrate on the contribution of John Calvin to our understanding of the Trinity, however, one important issue requires attention before we arrive at the Reformation

90.

period, and so, Calvin himself. It is 'the Latin heresy'. <sup>145</sup> By Calvin's time a subtle wedge had been driven between the ontological relations of the Trinity, especially between Christ and God the Father. On the one hand, the formal orthodox creeds were retained, but on the other hand, everyday thinking and daily life had compromised such formulations. The nexus or link between Christ and God was breached, and considered, to all intents and purposes, as an artificial, instrumental and external relation, rather than ontological, reflecting the authentic internal relations of the Trinity. As a consequence, grace came to be seen as a commodity, albeit donated to man, often argued as contingent on the winsome merits of Christ and instrumentally dispensed to man via the Church's sacramental system. This meant that rather than God giving Himself to man, the divine gifts and giver were detached from each other, and God provided no self-expression through the Son and Spirit. This disjunction between the giver and gifts resulted in another dichotomy, with the incarnation and atonement seen as separated, and so requiring the multiplicity of 'theories of the atonement' to provide some logical explanation for the - now divided - person and work of Christ. Further, we have noted that Athanasius insisted that since the Son is self-existent as God, the incarnation is the ontological union of the Word/Son of God and man. This means that, for Athanasius, the thought (Logos) and action of God are one: the self-giving inner relations of God are expressed in the incarnation of the Son, who by the Spirit, employs parables and works to signify, reveal and realise the reconciliation promised by God, and the redemption and recapitulation of man

---

<sup>144</sup> James Orr, *The Progress of Dogma*, James Clarke & Co.: n.d., page 283.

<sup>145</sup> See T F Torrance, 'The Deposit of Faith', in the *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 36, No. 1, 1983, pages 1-28; 'Karl Barth and the Latin Heresy' *S/T*, Vol. 39, No. 4, 1986, pages 289-309, and George Yule, 'Luther Attack on the Latin Heresy' in *Christ in our Place*, ed. by T Hart & D Thimell, (Paternoster Press: 1989), pages 224-252.

to  
91.

participate in the communion of God. But what Athanasius perceived as ontological, and inseparably linked, others had failed to discern, either in its initial form, or implications. For example, the converted Carthaginian lawyer, Tertullian, had earlier brought a Latin dialectic way of thinking to bear on this matter (he was, however, the first to introduce the term 'Trinity' into theology). In so doing, he had abstracted the 'knowledge (or truth) of God' from its concrete actualisation in Christ as incarnate Son, and taking this position to 'its logical conclusion', ended with the truth being (i.) detached from Christ, (ii.) composed of propositions perceived to be revelation by itself, and (iii.) a fixed or static set of doctrines as prescriptive or regulative beliefs (ie. 'we believe that' rather than believing in God). Therefore the legacy which Calvin, and the other Reformers inherited, was a mixture of lip service to orthodox creeds, and confused pastoral practice (and its theological justification): into such chaos they were called to defend and declare the truth of the one Trinitarian God, retrieve the initiative taken by Athanasius and Augustine, and express both orthodoxy and orthopraxy. While Luther maintained the formal credal articulations of the Trinity, and felt constrained to concentrate more on the great principle of justification by faith in Christ alone', Calvin may be regarded as the key Reformation figure to have recovered and rehabilitated the Church's understanding of the Trinity. But before we examine and evaluate his contribution, we will briefly mention something of his life and ministry, after which we shall survey some of his chief opponents and their views on the Trinity.

#### b) John Calvin: Life and Ministry 92.

John Calvin (1509-64)—French reformer and theologian. Born at Noyon in Picardy (10 July 1509) to Gerard Cauvin (a notary public employed by the local bishop) and his wife Jeanne la France of Cambrai. The second of five sons, John initially studied for the priesthood (1523-27), but in 1528 commenced law studies in Orleans and Bourges. By 1533 he became convinced that he would be instrumental in the restoration of the Church to its primal purity, and came to prominence among the leaders of the Protestant movement in Paris.

After a short period of imprisonment and in danger of persecution he fled to Switzerland (in 1535), to devote his life to study. In March 1536 the first edition of the Latin **Christianae Religionis Institutio** was published. On a 'chance' visit to Geneva, Calvin heeded Farel's urgent appeals to forego his promising academic career and join the reformer in reorganising the Swiss canton. His time as preacher and professor was short lived. Farel was expelled in 1538, and Calvin moved, at the invitation of Martin Bucer, to Strasbourg. There he met and married Idelette de Bure (died 1549): the widow of an Anabaptist converted to the Reformed position, she bore him one child, a son, who lived for only a few days.

Following a fruitful ministry in Strasbourg, he returned in 1541 to Geneva, and spent the next 14 years working to reform the immoral city as a theocratic commonwealth, conformed to God's will. Under his oversight, civil laws were revised, church government and discipline re-introduced, liturgy revised, and a university founded. By 1555 he had become the leader of the community, offered shelter to English and Scottish Protestant refugees, and supported the French Protestants. Throughout this period, the bulk of his New Testament

93.

commentaries were published, together with writings on the reformation and predestination.

From 1555 until his death he dominated the community by his moral insight and wisdom, established an education system for young people, arranged for the care of the aged and poor, and continued the revision of the community's laws. Multitudes of refugees found Geneva a safe haven: students flocked to his academy lectures, to return home as missionaries to England, Scotland, and most European countries. He completed many Old Testament commentaries (on 23 books), preached frequently, offered wise counsel through many letters and personal contacts, and rewrote the Institutes (final French edition in 1560). Racked by constant pain from a stomach ulcer, haemorrhoids (also bouts of malaria and possibly rheumatism or sciatica), simple in life style (yet enjoying lawn bowls, darts, quoits and la clef, the Genevan 'jig', and good wine and food), the

influential reformer died on 27 May 1564.

### **c) Trinitarian dispute in the Reformation**

Calvin's life and ministry, and particularly his views of the Trinity, and especially his defence in the Institutes, must be seen against the backdrop of three main protagonists—Pierre Caroli, Michael Servetus and Valentines Gentilis. A brief sketch of their views and contacts with Calvin will provide us with a 'feel' for the setting in which he worked and wrote.

#### **\* Pierre Caroli**

Pierre Caroli, a brilliant but unstable Paris scholar, who vacillated between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism (he simultaneously espoused prayers for the dead while denouncing the notion of purgatory!), challenged Calvin's Trinitarian orthodoxy in 1537.

94.

Caroli had become a pastor in Lausanne and on a visit of Calvin to the city had accused him (together with Farel and Viret) of heresy and supplanting the three Creeds (Apostolic, Nicean, and Athanasian) with a novel Genevan creed, the **Instruction in Faith**. While ready to subscribe belief in one God, Calvin was apprehensive of affirming the Athanasian creed—especially its concluding anathemas against heresies—since he was aware that Caroli might presume to accuse him and his friends of one or other of the condemned heresies. Such was the case, and at the Synod held in Lausanne on May 15, 1537, Calvin successfully (but intemperately) defended himself against the charge of Arianism. Caroli was deprived of his pastoral charge, and later in the same month was accused of gross immorality and forbidden to preach.

Two years later Caroli appeared in Strasbourg, again to accuse Calvin of anti Trinitarian beliefs and anti-credal sentiments. It is reported that Calvin's unbridled temper flared—when provoked he reacted against Caroli like a 'wild beast'. In 1545 Calvin published a pamphlet against Caroli: perhaps the recurrent memory of his adversary's barbed accusations drove him to so emphatically protest his 'Trinitarian orthodoxy'. Perhaps it also contributed to Calvin's determined even obsessive attitude towards Michael Servetus, and to a lesser extent, Valentinus Gentile.

#### **\*Michael Servetus (1511-53)**

Michael Servetus, physician and heretic, a native of Navarre, student (of mathematics, philosophy, theology and law) in Spanish university cities, travelled throughout Italy and Germany, and met Melanchthon and Bucer. His Biblical studies evidently led him to repudiate or modify the doctrine of the Trinity, especially as he sought to convert both Jews and Moors. 95.

He rejected the notion of an eternal Son in his **De Trinitatis Erroribus Libri VII** (1531). This work disturbed his friends, so he fled to Paris, where he studied medicine, becoming the personal physician of the Archbishop of Vienna. Resuming his theological studies, he covertly corresponded at length with Calvin, who finally exposed his anti-Trinitarian views.

In 1553 his main work **Christianismi Restitutio** was anonymously published. He denied the Trinity and full divinity of Christ, whose humanity he regarded as a triplex compound, of (i.) the Word, which while not divine was the ideal reason for all created beings, (ii.) the soul and (iii.) the human body. His authorship was exposed, he was condemned by the Inquisition in Vienna, and while escaping en route to Italy via Geneva, was recognised, arrested, and denounced. Refusing to recant, he was burnt as a heretic (Calvin favoured a less barbarous method of execution) on October 27, 1553.

#### **\*Valentinus Gentilis**

Valentines Gentilis, an Italian refugee who fled to Geneva, and in 1558 refused to subscribe to a confession of faith imposed on the Italian Church to reconcile divergent views of the Trinity and Christology. After being arrested, he appeared to retract his position, was then accused of blasphemy, and on further recanting (and thereby avoiding being beheaded), was required as an act of public penance to incinerate his own books. On fleeing from Geneva, he resumed his anti-Trinitarian stance in Lyons, was ejected from Poland, and crossed the authorities in Bern. Unlike their Genevan counterparts, they had no hesitation in executing him, by beheading, on September 10, 1566.

96.

What Calvin encountered—and more than matched—in his opponents was their superficial

appreciation and interpretation of the Scriptures, which exposed their fundamental framework as being that of Renaissance philosophy and humanistic ethics. We are now ready to turn to Calvin's exposition of God the Trinity.

### **b) Calvin's Mystery of the Trinity**

Having considered the context in which Calvin wrote, we are now better prepared to come to his own contribution in the Institutes. <sup>146</sup> For the Genevan reformer the treatment of the Trinity is deliberately placed within the Knowledge of God the Creator, after the chapter dealing with idolatry. The remainder of this section is a summary of the argument of the chapter on the Trinity—Book I: chapter xiii of the Institutes. Firstly, the chapter is divided into its two main sections, the first of these a positive didactic and declarative statement of the orthodox view of the Trinity, the latter a polemic defence, refuting contemporary heretical views. Second, Calvin's paragraph by paragraph argument is summarised.

#### **The Orthodox Doctrine of the Trinity**

- i. The Significance of the Persons [1-6]
- ii. The Deity of the Son [7-13]
- iii. The Deity of the Spirit [14-15]
- iv. The Trinity as Oneness and Threeness [16-20]

#### **Refutation of Some Recent Heresies**

- i. The necessity of faith [21]
- ii. Servetus' rejection of the Trinity [22]  
—his view of 'theogony', with the Son and Spirit 97.  
indiscriminately mingled with created beings, with substantial deity in other created beings.
- iii. The full Godhead of the Son as with the Father, etc. [23-26]
- iv. Adversaries (esp. Valentinus Gentilis) improperly appeal to Irenaeus [27] v. Further appeal to Tertullian [28] vi. The unanimous affirmation by Church doctors to the orthodox view of Trinity [29]

#### Book I: Chapter xiii

In scripture, from the creation onward, we are taught one essence of God, which contains three persons.

Terms used in the doctrine of the Trinity by the orthodox fathers, 1-6.

1. God's nature is immeasurable and spiritual: Scriptural teaching about God should be enough to banish both vulgar or populist delusions, and discredit pseudo-sophisticated subtleties of secularists. In emphasising God's spiritual nature, the Scripture acknowledges God's accommodation of Himself to our 'slight intelligence': this is the correct reason for the so called Scriptural anthropomorphisms.
2. The three 'Persons' in God: God Himself provides that which distinguishes Himself from idols, 'for he so proclaims himself the sole God as to offer himself to be contemplated clearly in three persons'. To avoid error we must reject false notions of 'persons' and depend on the Scripture's presentation, as in Hebrews 1:3ff. to affirm the one essence or ousia in God, yet also affirming three hypostaseis or subsistences, each distinct from the other.

98.

3. The expressions 'Trinity' and 'Person' aid the interpretation of Scripture and are therefore admissible: these terms are rejected by some as being 'human' inventions, yet such argumentation does not shake our conviction in one God in three persons, each of which remains entirely God. Continued argumentation ends in the loss of truth and love. Countering the charge of employing 'foreign' terms to describe God, Calvin affirms that where 'novel' terms cloud rather than clarify the simplicity of God's Word, they are to be repudiated: on the other hand, where they do indeed clarify, they are to be retained as aids highlighting the truth.
4. The Church has regarded expressions like 'Trinity', 'Person', etc. as necessary to unmask false teachers: doctors of the early and the present Church have felt compelled to employ such 'novel' terms to expose false accusers, who seek to disguise their errors in 'layers of verbiage'. For instance,

---

<sup>146</sup> Calvin's magnum opus—and perhaps that of the Reformation itself—is the 'Institutes of the Christian Religion' (Institutio Christianae Religionis), see Appendix A for details.

the early fathers used the word *homoousios* to expose the sacrilegious Arias' duplicity, for while he confessed that Christ was God and the Son of God, he also affirmed that Christ was created and had a beginning, like other creatures. Again, Sabellius considered Father, Son and Spirit as mere names or attributes of God, without rank or distinction. Rejecting his position, the fathers asserted that a trinity of persons subsists in the one God.

5. Limits and necessity of theological terms: since these terms were not 'rashly invented', we ought not prematurely repudiate them. While we may be better off without them, our prime concern must be that all recognise and affirm that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one, yet differentiated from each other by a 'peculiar quality'. Further, we ought heed the warning given by the fathers about the limitations of Greek and Latin terms, emulate their humility in the use of language, and be conscious of the accusations of heretics that we betray our own inconsistencies and deficiencies as we use such terms.

6. The meaning of the most important conception: we may assert that for us 'Person' means a 'subsistence' in God's essence: such subsistence is the act of being in relation to others, yet distinguished by a special quality. Again, when God is mentioned in a simple and indefinite manner, this use necessarily includes both the Son and the Spirit, as well as the Father. However, when the persons of the Trinity are compared with each other, their special qualities distinguish them from each other. Finally, Tertullian's definition that the divine economy or distribution has no compromising effect on the unity of essence is to be accepted.

### **The Eternal Deity of the Son, 7-13**

7. The deity of the Word: the term 'Word' as employed in both the Testaments is no mere utterance, but is rather the 'everlasting Wisdom, residing in God, from which both all oracles and all prophecies go forth'. After citing I Peter 1:10-11, cf II Peter 1:21; Heb. 1:2-3; Proverbs 8:2ff. and John 1:1-3, Calvin argues that 'unchangeable, the Word abides everlastingly one and the same with God, and is God himself'.

8. The eternity of the Word: while some dare not 'openly deprive him of his divinity, [yet] secretly filch away his eternity', by stating that the Word began when God opened his mouth to create the universe. Rather, Calvin commenting on Genesis 1:3, John 17:5, and John 1:13, states that 'the Word, conceived beyond the beginning of time by God, has perpetually resided with him. By this, his eternity, his true essence, and his divinity are proved.'

100.

9. The deity of Christ in the Old Testament: postponing the treatment of the person of the Mediator (until 'redemption' in Bk. II.xii-xvii), we are here concerned with the multiple testimony affirming Christ's deity (so in Psalm 45:6, 44:7Vg). Opinions by mediaeval Jewish commentators (possibly Rashi, Abraham Ibn Ezra and David Kimchi) are to be rejected, since they fail to consistently interpret their own Scriptures (notably Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel) where the Christ is identified as the object of faith, as is God himself.

10. The 'Angel of the Eternal God': these Jews also fail to perceive that Jehovah himself is frequently identified as an/the Angel (ie. in Judges 6; 7; 13). Servetus is cited (here for the first time in the Institutes) as impiously asserting that God never disclosed himself to Abraham and other patriarchs, and that they worshipped an angel in his place. However, in concert with the orthodox doctors, we interpret that chief angel to be God's Word, already fulfilling the office of Mediator. Citing Hosea 12 and Zechariah 2, Calvin concludes 'that he [Christ] is the same God who had always been worshipped among the Jews.'

11. The divinity of Christ in the New Testament: witness of the apostles: Paul (Rom. 9; 14; Ephesians 4:8) employs citations from the Psalms and Isaiah to show that Christ is the God who will never share his glory with another; John asserts that Isaiah saw the majestic God in the Temple, and that person was Christ (John 12; cf. Isaiah 6); and further references in Hebrews (to Psalms), and those cited by Paul and John confirm that Christ is no second 'god' but is rather the one true God, to whom worship is properly afforded.

101.

12. The divinity of Christ is demonstrated in his works: Christ has been intimately participating in the governance of the world (with the Father, as in John 5:17), as well as having the power and authority to search the hearts and minds of men, and remit sins.

13. The divinity of Christ is demonstrated by his miracles: while it must be conceded that prophets and apostles worked miracles, and thereby distributed the divine donations in their ministry, Christ exhibited his own power. Further, genuine salvation, goodness and justice are of and from God himself—since Christ obviously had these, it must follow that he is God. Such good things are bestowed upon us as we invoke Christ that we seen in the Old Testament as the domain of God. We are instructed not only 'that by the Son's intercession do those things which the Heavenly Father bestows come to us but that by mutual participation in power the Son himself is the author of them.... There, indeed, does the pious mind perceive the very presence of God, and almost touches him, when it feels itself quickened, illumined, preserved, justified, and sanctified.'

#### **The Eternal Deity of the Spirit, 14-15.**

14. The divinity of the Spirit is demonstrated in his work: a corresponding proof of the Spirit is sought in the same source. It affirms that the Spirit was active in 'tending that chaotic mass' (so Gen. 1:2) and adorning creation with its beauty and order: that the Spirit participated with God in the commissioning of the prophets; that our experience confirms the witness of Scripture to the Spirit's work as the giver of essence, life and movement to all created things, as the author of regeneration (by his own power) and future immortality, as the bestower of wisdom and speech, giver of justification, power, sanctification, truth, grace, and every good thing, and the one through whom we enter into the

102.

very communion of God. Therefore, the Spirit participates in the divine power, and 'resides hypostatically in God.'

15. Express testimonies for the deity of the Spirit: by reason of the indwelling of the Spirit we have become the designated and chosen temples of God: therefore, the Spirit is God (Calvin cites Augustine as arguing for the Spirit's divinity on the basis of I Cor. 3:16ff.; 6:19; II Cor. 6:16). Again, where the prophets speak of the Lord of Hosts, the New Testament declares that these words are the utterance of the Spirit: therefore the Spirit is God. Finally, to sin against the Spirit is to sin grievously, and such blasphemy will never be remitted.

#### **Distinction and Unity of the Three Persons, 26-20**

16. Oneness: the apostle Paul insists on one God, faith and baptism (Eph. 4:5), yet the name by which we are baptised is of the One God, but with equal clarity is expressed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). 'Hence it is quite clear that in God's essence reside three persons in whom one God is known.' Baptism therefore confirms the unity of God: with one faith we believe in the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Arians mistakenly deny (they 'prate most foolishly') the common essence of both the Father and the Son; Macedonians (with a 'like madness tormented' following Macedonius, a seminarian bishop of Constantinople, who rejected the deity of the Spirit) deny the full deity of the Spirit, supposing the 'Spirit' to merely be divine gifts.

17. Threeness: while the Scripture does indeed see a distinction of the Father from the Word, and the Word from the Spirit, we must be cautious and reverent in considering such distinctions. Gregory of Nazianzus is quoted with approval: 'I cannot think on the one without quickly being

103.

encircled by the splendour of the three: nor can I discern the three without being straight-way carried back to the one.' The words 'Father', 'Son' and 'Spirit' denote a real distinction, not a division. Calvin cites a number of passages from John's Gospel (1:3; 5:32; 8:16; 15:25;17:5;14:16) to confirm the Scripture's witness to the distinction of the Father and Son, and Son and Spirit.

18. Difference of Father, Son and Spirit: Calvin doubts the expediency of human comparisons or analogies to express these distinctions—at the best they are, as even the church fathers acknowledged, inadequate. Calvin refrains for two reasons, (i.) giving occasion to the malicious, and (ii.) deluding the ignorant. Those provided by the Scripture, however, are to be received. To the Father is attributed the beginning of activity, as 'the fountain and wellspring of all things'; to the Son, wisdom, counsel and the orderly disposition of creation; to the Spirit is 'assigned the power and efficacy of that activity'. While there is no distinction of time, there is one of order: there is neither



before or after in eternity, and the human mind, in contrast to the experience of faith, contemplates God first, then considers the wisdom as coming from God, and finally the 'power whereby he executes the decrees of his plan'. Calvin cites Romans 8 as further evidence for the dual procession of the Spirit, as the Spirit of the Father, and of the Son (following the Western form of the Nicene Creed).

19. The relationship of Father, Son and Spirit: 'in each hypostasis the whole divine nature is understood . . . [yet] to each belongs his own peculiar quality'. Calvin approves Augustine's view:

"Christ with respect to himself is called God, with respect to the Father, Son. Again, the Father with respect to himself is called God; with respect to the Son, Father. In so far as he is called Father with respect

104.

to the Son, he is not the Son; in so far as he is called the Son with respect to the Father, he is not the Father; in so far as he is called both Father with respect to himself, and Son with respect to himself, he is the same God."

Augustine's position, which may be tabulated thus<sup>147</sup> —

God (in Himself)

**Father** (in relation to the Son)

God (in Himself) **Son** (in relation to the Father) God (in Himself)

**Holy Spirit** (in relation to Father and Son)

is developed expansively in his fifth book **On the Trinity**. Finally Calvin cautions, 'it is far safer to stop with that relation which Augustine sets forth than by too subtly penetrating into the sublime mystery to wander through many evanescent speculations.'

20. The triune God: 'when we profess to believe in one God, under the name of God is understood a single, simple essence, in which we comprehend three persons, or hypostaseis.' Hence, when the name 'God' is mentioned, without differentiation, all three persons are designated. Yet this same name also often applies particularly to the Father, as beginning and source, without any compromise to the full deity of the Son or Spirit. Further, the names 'Father', 'Son' and 'Spirit' all indicate a relationship among the persons. Hence, the whole essence of God is spiritual, comprehending Father, Son and Spirit.

105.

Refutation of anti-Trinitarian heresies, 21-29.

21. The ground of all heresy: a warning to all: Satan, as he has done in the past, continues to stir up 'ungodly spirits to harry orthodox teachers over this matter and today also is trying to kindle a new fire from the old embers.' That in question is the divine essence of the Son and the Spirit, and the distinction of persons. While Calvin's initial intention was didactic and declarative to the teachable, he must now turn to the defence of the truth. Such a great task calls for soberness, due to man's limited knowledge of God, and fidelity to the revealed word of God, not idle and inordinate curiosity.

22. Servetus' contention against the Trinity: to recite the catalogue of past errors and heresies would waste time and exhaust patience. Instead, our current task is to hold fast to what the Scripture has clearly disclosed, that is, the unity of essence and the distinction of persons. One contemporary erroneous view is that of Servetus, who evidently accused Trinitarians of being atheists. Calvin summed up Servetus' position as, (i.) the Trinity is 'tripartite when three persons are said to reside in his essence' (yet such a triad impugns God's unity), (ii.) 'Persons' are 'certain external ideas which do not truly subsist in God's essence, but represent God to us in one manifestation or another'. Servetus' 'theogony' (= 'God as parent': for Servetus there was no interval between the 'generation of the Son' and the human birth of Jesus Christ)<sup>148</sup> sees no distinction in God, at the beginning, since

---

<sup>147</sup> Ford Lewis Battles, *Analysis of the Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin* (Baker: 1980), page 60.

<sup>148</sup> Battles, *op. cit.*, page 61.

the Spirit and the Word were one and the same; but 'when Christ came forth as God from God, the Spirit proceeded from him as another God'. Further, God is in both the Son and Spirit, and, the Spirit 'being substantially in us and also in wood and stone, is a portion of God.' Hence, the Son and Spirit are indiscriminately mingled

106.

with all created things generally. Finally, 'the spirits of believers are coeternal and consubstantial with God, although he elsewhere assigns a substantial deity not only to the soul of man but to other created things.'

23. The Son is God even as the Father: further errors are now alluded to, with the views of Valentinus Gentile and others who at least avoid Servetus' impiety, and confessed the three persons, but then qualified this by arguing that the Father is truly and properly the sole God, the 'essentiator' (= essence giver), who infused his deity into the Son (it therefore being a derivative or abstracted from, God's own essence). This led to a distinction between the essence of God (ie. Father) on the one hand, and that of the Son and Spirit on the other. Calvin counters this by arguing that some differentiation in order is required for the Father to not be the Son. And without true essence, Christ's supposed deity is annihilated, and he is a God in name but not reality.

24. The name 'God' in Scripture does not refer to the Father alone: the opponents object that all unqualified references to God in the Scriptures must apply solely to the Father since 'unless the Father alone were truly God, he would be his own Father'. Calvin counters this absurdity with the fact that 'from the time that Christ was manifested in the flesh, he has been called the Son of God, not only in that he was the eternal Word begotten before all ages from the Father, but because he took upon himself the person and office of the mediator, that he might join us to God.' Further objections are answered by citations from Philippians 2:6-10 and John 4:23-24.

25. The divine nature is common to all three Persons: while others divide the divine essence between Father, Son and Spirit, we assert, with the Scripture, that God is one in essence. Their claim that we hold to a 'quaternity' (that is, of divine essence + three persons) is unfounded,

107.

since for us the unity lies in the essence, while Trinity in the persons. Taken to its logical conclusion, their position would be a Trinity comprised of 'the conjunction of the one God with two created things.'

26. The subordination of the incarnate Word to the Father is no counter evidence: our opponents cannot fathom why Christ, if properly God, should be called 'Son'. When Christ addressed God in John 17:3 as Son to Father, he was speaking as Mediator: this in no way compromised his own divinity, for it was included within the name 'God'. The highest rank afforded to the Father does not subordinate the Son to an secondary or inferior rank of deity beneath the Father's glory or essence: rather, 'because endowed with heavenly glory he gathers believers into participation in the Father.... Christ descended to us, to be us up to the Father, and at the same time to bear us up to himself, inasmuch as he is one with the Father.'

27. Our adversaries falsely appeal to Irenaeus: since Irenaeus asserted that the Father of Christ was the sole and eternal God of Israel, our opponents falsely presume that he rejected orthodoxy. Rather, he was combating heretics who denied that the Old Testament God and the Father of Christ were one and the same. Our current dispute is with those who deny the same essential deity to Christ which they readily attribute to God the Father. Finally, there is overwhelming evidence in Irenaeus' work to prove that he acknowledged Christ as one and the same God as His Father.

28. The appeal to Tertullian also is of no avail: nor is Tertullian to be adopted as an advocate for our opponents. For Tertullian holds to the essential unity of the Godhead, but also allows within the divine dispensation or economy the distinction among the persons. And Tertullian's alleged subordination of the Son, 'as second to the Father', is not related to substance or essence, but economy.

108.

29. All acknowledged doctors of the church confirm the doctrine of the Trinity: the claim by our opponents that Justin and Hilary support their cause is as baseless as their dependence on Irenaeus. Further, the alleged supportive citation from Ignatius is almost unanimously regarded as spurious. Augustine ('toward whom these rascals are most hostile') was conversant with the aforementioned fathers, approving their views: he also called the 'Father the beginning of all deity because he is from no one; and wisely considers that the name of God is especially ascribed to the Father because if the beginning comes not from him, the simple unity of God cannot be conceived.'

Calvin concludes that this completes his refutation of the 'chicaneries' by which Satan has endeavoured to pervert the truth of the doctrine. 'I trust that the whole sum of this doctrine has been faithfully explained, if my readers will impose a limit upon their curiosity, and not seek out for themselves more eagerly than is proper troublesome and perplexed disputations. '

**c) Calvin's Contribution to Trinitarian Thought** The doctrine of God necessitates Trinity: 'The doctrine of the Trinity is not a special area of the Christian doctrine of God, but its overall epistemological framework and content....It is concerned with participation in the Father by the Son in the Spirit.'<sup>149</sup>

Calvin operated within the Western Church inheriting, as we have seen, the contributions of Augustine and Latin/Roman theology (with their stress on judicial-forensic soteriological theories) as compared with the Eastern (Cappadocians, and the retention of the communal/relational).

109.

Could he break free from the 'Latin heresy', meld the fragmented pieces of a consistent and authentic view of the Trinity together, and maintain such authenticity throughout his thought and praxis? If so, what would be the critical features of such a work, what implications could and/or would he draw from his understanding of the Trinity for the rest of his 'theology', and what elements identify Calvin's particular contribution to Trinitarian theology?

Calvin's thought and expression is marked by simplicity, in his selection of relevant details, the structures within which they are considered, and the exposition of his reflections. The initial context for his treatment of the Trinity in the Institutes was following the discussion of Christ as the sole object of faith. But in the final, the 1559 edition, it was placed in the section dealing with the first Article of the Creed (the Creator): with faith treated later in Book III on the Spirit, the doctrine is here presented, without epistemological preparation. In so doing, he still acknowledged the critical place of Christology in his treatment, but indicated that the Trinity governs our whole understanding of God, and so creation, redemption and sanctification.

When we consider his actual treatment of the Trinity, we note his stress on the full essence of the persons, and the close/intimate connection of all outer actions with the inner essence of God as Father Son and Spirit. This means that the outer actions are not arbitrary, but reflect the actual internal relations of the Godhead.

We noted above that Calvin was accused of being Sabellian and Arianist in his views: his exposition counters such charges by affirming that the Christ is the eternal Yahweh: hence, whatever is said of the Father as God may (must) be said of the second Person.

110.

Therefore, he argues, Christ is not merely pre-existent but self-existent. And, the Trinity is self-existent, not merely one person being distinct from the others.

Following his argument through, we find that the twin questions of subordinationism (that is, viewing and speaking—and so subjecting—of God in human terms and ideas) and modalism (which argues that certain actions must be alien to God in His fullness) are both dismissed. In his elimination of any remnants of subordinationism with his stress on the word *autoboths* of the Son, Calvin at last expounds the full deity of Christ, to be affirmed within and by the Church. And Calvin is just as adamant about the full deity of the Spirit.

When we turn to the matter of terminology, especially as raised by his opponents, who claimed that the notion of 'trinity' was alien to the Scriptures. Calvin acknowledged that while the term 'trinity' may not be explicitly 'Biblical', the witness to its meaning and veracity may not be questioned. Two brief examples may be cited:

i.) Historically the revelation which came in and through Christ (He consistently called God His Father, and the climactic event of Pentecost baptising the Church with the Spirit) identified for the Church the distinct persons of the Godhead, while affirming the concerted action of the Father, Son and Spirit,

ii.) He notes that baptism is into the One Name (cf attributes which are essentially integral to all of God's 'modes') of God, yet this remains Christological (in the name of Jesus/Christ). And when others

---

<sup>149</sup> Dietrich Ritschl, *The Logic of Theology*, (SCM: 1986), page 144.

suggested that while the Scriptures failed to employ the word 'trinity', creation itself provided adequate expressions to indicate and clarify the 'triunity of God', Calvin rejected such notions of *vestigia trinitas* as unfounded.

111.

Assuming his view of the Trinity to be sound, simple and yet sublime, Calvin worked out the implications of his position. Following Athanasius, that only if Christ is God is there any ontological union of God and Man, Calvin went on to argue for the believer's union with Christ, and Christ's vicarious humanity.<sup>150</sup> That is, in the ontological union of God with man, in Christ there is full carnal, cognitive and spiritual union with man, yet as Son He shares the fullness of Godhead. Further, by coming to know Christ, the believer receives the benefits or blessing offered in and by Christ (thereby experiencing evangelical rather than legal repentance). Here Calvin has seen the inseparable union of the divine giver and gift, and stressed the self-giving and self-expression of God in Christ—he has countered the 'Latin heresy'. And while Calvin argued that such was confirmed by his own experience, he also argued that such notions were not mere subjectivism, for this was a necessary corollary of his high view of the objective God being united with man in Christ.

Further, since he saw the Trinity as governing all salvation in the life, death and resurrection of the incarnate and eternal Word Son, Calvin went on to discern the whole of the Christian's life as Trinitarian and incarnational. This is seen in his views on the sacraments, prayer, vocation, sanctification (the avoidance of idolatry and the mortification of the flesh), the ministry and mission of the Church, and the eschatology of hope for creation-at-large, with the promised new creation already present and realised in and by Christ. And what the Trinitarian God has already accomplished for creation in Christ is being applied by the Spirit, with the destination of all in the Elect One secured by the omnipotent holy grace of God, and to be reached by the people of God with Christ.

112.

John Calvin set his treatment of the true God in the face of idolatry: he urged the Church to reject all idolatry and return to its former loyalty to not only orthodox credal statements, but to a full and rich experience of the Trinity in daily life. His prime concern, in concert with his fellow reformers, was not to venture beyond the testimony of the Scriptures, and the witness of the Spirit, who co-inheres the very being of God, and so is the one through whom God bears witness to Himself. Defending the truth of the Trinity against enemies of the truth, Calvin lay his stress on unity of essence, the distinction of the persons, and subordination without any further explanation. And in declaring the truth, he rehabilitated the life of the Church to a fully Trinitarian and incarnational participation in the very life of God through Christ.

#### **d) The Reformers Influence Upon the Contemporary Church**

The Mediaeval Church faced the constant dangers of formal or functional Unitarianism and tritheism. Calvin and his fellow reformers recovered the balanced and consistent view of the Trinity. But within a short time their followers had lapsed back into one or other extreme, or simply took for granted their view of the Trinity. In fact, to all intents and purposes, Trinitarian theology was eclipsed—again.<sup>151</sup>

The views of Luther and Calvin were soon displaced by those who perpetuated the 'Latin heresy'. On the one hand the pietists and liberals continued the line of Renaissance thinking to its conclusion, in the morass of subjectivism (also confusing the human spirit with the Holy Spirit): on the other, a sterile scholasticism (with a displaced obsession with

113.

theological systems, almost believed to have quasi-hypostatic significance) gradually overtook and

---

<sup>150</sup> Trevor Hart, 'Humankind in Christ and Christ in Humankind: Salvation as participation in Our Substitute in the Theology of John Calvin' in *S/T*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 1989, pages 67-84.

<sup>151</sup> See, for example, M Charles Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology* (The Handset Press: 1985), for a discussion of the doctrine of assurance, and the wider theological framework of 'covenant' see James B Torrance, 'Covenant or Contract? A Study of the Theological Background of Worship in Seventeenth-Century Scotland' in *S/T*, Vol 28, No.1, 1970.

froze and fossilised much of the Reformed Churches into objectivism.

Against such extremes few clarion calls were heard. Among them may be named, in Scotland, for example, John McLeod Campbell, P.T. Forsyth and James Denney (but note that both Forsyth and Denney lacked a high view of the incarnation, and saw it simply as instrumental). All three stood for the objective revelation of God, the divine self-giving in Christ, the reconciliation and redemption accomplished and applied by the Trinity. In doing so, they rejected both the liberals' loss of the objective action of God in human history, as well as the evangelical cold orthodoxy, which had confused its formulations of the Gospel (also its soteriological obsession), often making the permanent and absolute message of the Church contingent on prevailing—but temporary and relativistic—philosophical systems.

When the evangelicals did speak out, they failed to gain much of a hearing. For example, in one of their most significant publishing ventures—entitled **The Fundamentals**—there is no treatment of the Trinity! But in 1917 the theologians' self-indulgence and complacency was shattered—a bomb exploded in their playground! Karl Barth gave notice that the agenda was to be changed, and the Trinity was again at the head of items for consideration.

114.

### **e) The Recovery of Trinitarian Theology—Karl Barth**

The most extensive contemporary treatment of the Trinity is by Karl Barth (1886-1968), who affirmed the Trinity as the ground and governor of his theology. Over against Schleiermacher, for whom the Trinity was a mere appendix to his **The Christian Faith**, Barth saw the Trinity as providing the logic and dynamic of theology. Three points stand out in his **Dogmatics**: i) The Trinity is situated in theological prolegomena, instead of its usual place in the doctrine of God, ii) It is considered from the standpoint of revelation, as God makes possible and actual his self-expression in Jesus Christ, as God the Lord in unity yet also as Father, Son and Spirit (with the Son being the Word and Image of the Father, and the Spirit being the One who discloses the Image and communicates the Word);

iii) The term 'person' is abandoned, since its meaning has suffered radically throughout the history of doctrine, as is 'modalism'. Barth appears to have taken up Calvin's use of the expression 'modes of being' within God. Over against Barth, Emil Brunner (1889-1966) considered the Trinity to be a second order doctrine, and rejected the Athanasian articulation of the Trinity. Brunner argued that, "...we must honestly admit that the doctrine of the Trinity did not form part of the early Christian—New Testament—message, nor has it been a central article of faith in the religious life of the Christian Church as a whole, at any period in its history.... The ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity, established by the dogma of the ancient Church, is not a Biblical

115.

kerygma, therefore it is not the kerygma of the Church, but it is a theological doctrine which defends the central faith of the Bible and of the Church. Hence it does not belong to the sphere of the Church's message, but it belongs to the sphere of theology.... The idea of a "Triune God" does not form part of the witness and message of Primitive Christianity. <sup>152</sup>

Since Barth and Brunner brought the truth of the Trinity back 'into the limelight', a number of major treatments have been offered the Church. For a survey of recent Trinitarian trends, see the illuminating article by John Thompson (himself a student of Barth, and well read in P.T. Forsyth!). In passing, we note that Process theology has little place for the Trinity, and Liberation, Black, Feminist, Death of God (that is, by the Cross, God died in/as Christ) theologies stray from, and

---

<sup>152</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of God Dogmatics: Vol. I* (Westminster Press: 1950), pages 206-207, 217.

target Calvin's view of the Trinity as irrelevant, outmoded, naive, or incomprehensible. Nevertheless, at the end of the twentieth century, the Church is being forced to reconsider this critical issue, and hopefully, return to a consistent understanding of the Trinity. Certainly such a return would necessitate a reformation of thought and praxis within the Church: such a reformation would receive the acclamation of the great Reformer—John Calvin.

John Calvin's contribution to the Church's understanding of the Trinity was significant and salutary, and finally secured the 'orthodox' position within the life and ministry of the Church hearing and heeding the testimony of the Scriptures, guided by the confirmatory witness of the Church Fathers. Calvin retrieved the truth of the Trinity from heresy<sup>153</sup> and reestablished the Trinity as central to the Church's experience and exposition of the the Gospel of the self-giving of God in Christ.

116.

While many—both before and since Calvin—have failed to acknowledge the triune God whom he worshipped and served, we are called with the Church to know the triune God, and in our knowing, offer our glad response to the Father, through (and with) the incarnate Son, by the Spirit.

Finally, just as Calvin was ready to invoke and approve the witness of others (especially Gregory's comment noted above), so we echo the Words and sentiment of Jonathan Edwards, "I would not be understood to pretend to give a full explication of the Trinity; for I think it still remains an incomprehensible mystery, the greatest and the most glorious of all mysteries "<sup>154</sup>

## Conclusion 117.

This paper has presented firstly, an overview of the doctrine of God (and related doctrines) in two modern anti-Christian cults, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the Jehovah's Witnesses. Secondly it has presented the various anti-Christian ideas and practices that come under the category of the New Age Movement, a movement which seeks to offer substitutes for the God of the Bible. Then by way of biblical refutation to these beliefs and ideas a succinct overview of the development of the doctrine of the God in Church history has been presented, thereby giving a window into the Christian Church's own struggle to develop a doctrine of God. This aim was achieved by focusing mainly upon the contribution of French Reformer John Calvin in his apologetic of the doctrine of the Trinity, an apologetic which stands in contrast to the anti - Christian views presented in this work.

Nathan O. Hatch, in commenting upon the populist religion of the early republic (in North America) , states that,

“ In a culture that mounted a frontal assault upon tradition, mediating elites, and institutions, the Bible very easily became ...‘ a book dropped from the skies for all sorts of men to use in their own way.’ “<sup>155</sup> The rise of modern anti-Christian cults alongside the New Age Movement has occurred

---

<sup>153</sup> See Appendix D for a summary of the major heresies of the Trinity.

<sup>154</sup> Miscellany 308 'Trinity': in *The Philosophy of Jonathan Edward's from His private notebooks*, ed. H.G.Townsend, (Greenwood Press: 1977), page 260.

<sup>155</sup> Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratisation of American Christianity* - New Haven Yale University Press, p.182.

largely in the United States where the Bible has become for many people a benevolent piece of literature; awaiting a new critic, guru, or lover to breathe life into its pages by extracting some 'new truth'. This is a subtle and sinful work of the flesh as man seeks to manipulate God's precious self-revelation, thus enabling man to create God in his own image. Whilst the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons

118.

corrupt the image of God, the New Age Movement seeks to offer substitutes for God through various means that will support humanity's quest for salvation.

It may be shocking enough to think that such a posture towards God and His Word is always happening within the 'City of Man', and yet the matter goes deeper still. It appears that man is not content to be merely the manipulator of God's image, he must in fact also (by virtue of ontological necessities) set up a false system of worship. Such a system entails a means of salvation, and a utopian dream. In the world of the cults we see a clear manifestation of these false images of God and counterfeit systems of worship.

Doubtless there are many Australians for whom Christianity is still the religion with which they feel most culturally attuned. Migrants from Europe, the United Kingdom, North and South America, or New Zealand,

are at least Christian by name if not by conviction. Consequently, many Australians have been attracted to pseudo-Christian groups such as the Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses with their blend of elitist fundamentalism and a clear religious quest. Still others have opted for more exotic alternatives as found in New Age practices and philosophies.

One of the major fruits of man's sinful rebellion is his corruption or rejection of God's image. God's unyielding self revelation to humanity has either not been received (Rom.1:1ff), a response the Bible calls unbelief, or has been received through the filter of corrupt human nature, thus producing a distorted if often imaginative attempt to make God in our own image. Thus the perception and reception of the image of God has in the hands of angry sinners, birthed a myriad of systems of worship and doctrine that are pathetic substitutes for the true revelation of the Godhead

119.

as attested to by the written Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, and in the Living Word, Jesus Christ (Jn.1:1). In Jesus of Nazareth the Apostles came to the profound conclusion that in His Incarnation God became a man in Jesus Christ; "the Word was God...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us..." (Jn. 1:1ff) .

## **APPENDIX - A. 120. Calvin and the Institutes of the Christian Religion**

The Editions of the Institutes

1536—printed in Basle, the pocket sized volume of 516 pages, in Latin. Of the six chapters, the first four covered the Law, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper): the order followed was that of Luther's Catechisms. This first section, functioning as a manual was coupled with the more polemic final two chapters, where Calvin dealt with false sacraments and Christian Liberty (especially to defend the French Church against the accusation of civil rebellion).

**1539**—another Latin edition, printed in Strasbourg. This expanded edition, now in seventeen chapters, and a theological formulation that governed all other editions, includes an extensive defence of the Trinity against Caroli (who had accused him of Arianism), and elaborates his disputes against the Anabaptists (especially on the unity of the Old and New Testaments, and the significance of infant baptism). With new chapters on the knowledge of God, and man, further chapters on repentance and the nature of justification by faith, providence and predestination, it concludes with a chapter on the Christian life (issuing out of his pastoral experience and dependence on Bucer's thought and praxis).

**1541**—a French edition, published in Geneva. This edition is significant on two grounds, (i.) it was the first major theological work published in French (in fact, the first major work in modern French itself!), and (ii.) was popular, having been addressed to the common people of France. Its impact was immediate and extensive—it was the only book specifically cited in the Parliament of Paris Act of July 1, 1542, which decreed the suppression of heretical texts!

121.

**1543-45**—new Latin editions, issued from Strasbourg, with a French edition in 1545 from Geneva, comprising twenty one chapters. These similar editions contained an expansion of the material on the Creed, with new items on angels, and ecclesiastical organisations.

**1550-1557**—three further Latin editions, four in French, each containing twenty one chapters, now including the innovation of subdivisions. The 1550 and 1551 editions saw the expansion of his treatment of the Scripture and its authority, a new section on the human conscience, and the French editions had further material on the resurrection of the body.

**1559 (Latin) - 1560 (French)**—the thoroughly revised final edition, the 'Institutio Christianae Religionis', now first arranged in four books, and distinguished by chapters, by the best method; and so greatly enlarged by new material that it can almost be regarded as a new work'. Before, the plan followed the outline of the Catechism, now it was shaped by the quadripartite Apostolic Creed (Book I—Gods Book II Jesus Christ, Book III—the Holy Spirit, and Book IV—the Church): before, providence and predestination were linked, now they were separated, with the latter being treated as a correlative of salvation: before, ecclesiastical authority was considered under the rubric of faith; now under the article of the Church: before, the Christian life as a conclusion to the work, now incorporated within the work of the Holy Spirit. Finally, two other features stand out, with the section on the resurrection placed in the article of the Spirit, and the critical issue of forgiveness deliberately linked with Christ and the Holy Spirit, to avoid either an implicit or explicit dependence on the Church (contra Roman Catholicism's instrumental/sacramental view of forgiveness).

122.

### **Factors shaping the structure and development of the Institutes**

Obviously Calvin neither read nor wrote in isolation: there are a number of factors which shaped his theological thought and pastoral praxis, hence his writings. In common with the Reformers, he was steeped in the Scriptures, unparalleled in his grasp of the Old Testament, unmatched in his exegetical output.

Complementing his Biblical studies, Calvin was well versed in the writings of the Church Fathers, especially Augustine's dogmatics, John Chrysostom's 'unsurpassed exegetic and Origen. Supplementing his Patristic studies—yet neither of them supplanting the Scriptures—was his appreciation and appropriation of the declarations of the Councils. In his writings we detect the faint echoes of John Dun Scotus, and the resonating chords of the Reformers. From Luther the catechetical form of theological work (although Calvin was never competent with German), from Melancthon Christology, the Law, love and liberty (but certainly not free-will and predestination!), from Zwingli, albeit more often to contradict, the necessity to expound the nature of the sacraments, and clarify the responsibilities of the citizenry: and from Martin Bucer (with their intimate



association in Strasbourg) Calvin seems to have learned most (yet not as a clone or mimic). Further factors include his maturing experience of pastoral praxis in Strasbourg, his intense conviction to defend and declare the Church's faith, the desperate needs of Geneva, and his own personal experience of the grace of God in Christ.

Calvin's 'Institutes', initially a simple manual had become the dogmatic obverse to his vast exegetical labours, yet remaining didactic, especially in its French editions. From its humble conception it had become one of the few books that have profoundly shaped the course of history.

## **Appendix B.** 123.

### **A Brief survey of Doctrinal errors of the Trinity.**

Errors concerning the Trinity; have appeared over the centuries. They reappear today in various sects or cults.

a) Monarchianism, which teaches that the son is an attribute of God, and not of the same substance, nor even a person at all.

b) Modalism or Sabellianism, which holds that God is manifested, sometimes as Father, sometimes as Son and sometimes as Holy Spirit.

c) Patripassianism, is the view that God the Father, the one person in the Godhead, came down to earth and suffered on the Cross - apparently renouncing and deserting the sovereignty of the universe while doing so. Swendborg followed this heresy.

d) Tritheism, which falsely teaches that there are three God's.

e) Arianism, which teaches that Christ was the first and highest created Being, who, in turn, created the Holy Spirit - Jehovah's Witnesses.

f) Unitarianism, there is one God, Jesus the best of men, the Holy Spirit is a divine influence.

124.

## **Athanasias Creed**

"We worship one God in trinity and trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is all one, the glory co-equal the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, such is the Holy Spirit. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, The Holy Spirit uncreated. So the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is God yet not three Gods but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord. The Father is made of none neither created nor begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and the Son neither made nor created nor pity none is before or after the other. None is greater or less than the other. But the whole three persons together are co-eternal together and co-equal. So that in all things the unity is to be worshipped He that would be saved must thus think of the trinity."

**Appendix C.** 125.  
**Documentation to Footnotes on Jehovahs Witnesses**

**Appendix C. Cont'd.** 126.

**Appendix C. Cont'd.** 127.

**Appendix C. Cont'd.** 128.

## **Appendix .D. 129. Evangelising the New Age Movement.**

The following steps should be taken in order to successfully reach out to those involved in the New Age Movement. a) Preparation in Prayer

b) Study the New Age Movement

c) Friendship Evangelism (communicate love)

d) Establish your common ground.

e) Find out through intelligent questions what they actually believe. They may only embrace a few of the beliefs of the New Age Movement.

### **i) Finding Common Ground.**

There is definite common ground that can be found between Christians and those caught up in the New Age. For example;

a) Belief in the Supernatural.

b) Belief that the world and its people need salvation.

c) Belief in a coming New World.

Repeating and rewording our position at least three times in different words can be very beneficial in any witnessing encounter. People simply do not hear the first time, but need the reinforcement of repetition.

Defining terminology is vital, (e.g. what you mean by 'Jesus' or 'Christ'). try to define your terminology in an inoffensive way and when he/she is talking about God, love, Jesus, Christ, salvation or reincarnation, ask them to explain what they mean. Try to arrive at a dictionary definition rather than a subjective judgment.

Become clear and concise in your definitions of terms like the nature of man, human sin, the problem of evil and divine judgment and justice, attempting to keep it simple.

Question, don't teach. This will create an atmosphere of learning rather than debate.

Avoid criticism (commend), people will always get defensive if you attack them personally. You are discussing ideas not so much people.

### **ii) Reveal the weakness of moral relativism.**

This can be achieved by asking questions, showing the New Ager how logically flawed it is to allow subjectivism and moral relativism to lead him. Help him understand that he cannot live consistently with these principles. For instance ask, "If your truth is truth, and my truth is my truth, how can we be certain about anything?"

A good method at this juncture is to point out that the Nazis argument for killing Jews was a position that could not be refuted in a world of relative morality and ethics. Who could condemn Hitler for murdering six million Jews if their extinction was "his truth"? To argue he was wrong, if you are a relativist, is fallacious because your own definition of truth entitles Hitler as much right to his view as you to yours.

As we move towards the next Millennium the Christian Church faces a battle not with skepticism so much as with syncretism. Syncretism, used in the broadest sense, describes the process of borrowing elements of one religion from another in such a way as not to change the basic character of the receiving religion. It is questionable, however, whether such a broad definition is helpful, since it makes every religion syncretistic to some extent. It is not that people generally believe in nothing but rather that they are more likely to believe in everything. Therefore, when Christians speak of sharing 'The Truth' embodied in the Gospel, the Christian Church becomes yet another shop front for the 'religious consumer.'

In fairness to all non-Christians it must be stated that we can only come

131.

to comprehend a new thing in terms of what we know. It is no different when it comes to our understanding of the Gospel. Our approach is basically an approach from below, ie. we impose upon spiritual issues a framework that we have developed from the human life we know. We need to start from somewhere and the earthly approach was taken by Jesus Christ when He tried to reveal spiritual truth to His disciples. However, we need to move over to a new framework, or in the words of Jesus we need new wineskins (Matt.9:17). A new framework or reference point is needed.

In our modern culture introspection is a major trait. It has its origin in the Cartesian dictum of *cogito ergo sum*, 'I think therefore I am'. It teaches us an awareness of our own existence. This existentialist

(Existentialism is a philosophical theory emphasising the existence of the individual as a free agent determining his or her own development)

approach has led to an intensification of the isolation of the self. It is a culture where the first question is, 'What is in it for me?' It is a totally individualistic, narcissistic culture. Therein lies much of the difficulties we have in our churches and marriages. It is only a change to a new framework of thinking in terms of the covenant of Grace in the Gospel that will help to rid our culture of its predicament.

Our materialistic and technological culture emphasises the things that are outside of ourselves. It concentrates on tasks and achievements and very little on the being and relationship issues. Our Churches also are involved in this culture of numbers and achievements. We need to change over to a framework of thinking centred in the covenantal message of the Scriptures as seen in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. 132.

Jesus always approached his opponents questions to him by not answering them on their terms of reference. Jesus always pointed them away to the spiritual framework.

Prof. T.F.Torrance, in writing about Theological education today says,

"...we cannot convince others by formal argument, for so long as we argue within their framework, we can never induce them to abandon it. 'Formal operations relying on one framework of interpretation cannot demonstrate a proposition to persons who rely on another framework'. That applies to theological communications as much as scientific controversy, and yet this is precisely the erroneous line taken so often by apologetics, whether by the theologian or the preacher. Whenever we take that line we are simply reducing ourselves to be servants of public opinion or popular ideas of science or religion, and in that event we have nothing at all to offer to people which they do not already know or cannot tell to themselves much better than we. Moreover by taking this line we eliminate from theological knowledge its real meaning, for we deprive it of its proper message. That is why theological statements inevitably appear meaningless and impossibly paradoxical if we claim for them validity within a frame of reference which is the correlate of ordinary observable and empirically verifiable experience.....thus to cross from one frame of reference to another involves an act of radical self-denial on the one hand and the radical reconciliation to the new frame of reference on the other hand. This is another way of stating that theological communication and understanding always involve a movement of reconciliation." <sup>156</sup>

133.

### **iii) Show the Bible to be reliable.**

It is important to set forth the historic reliability of the Bible when discussing the concept of absolute truth with New Agers. The Bible must be seen as a guide to truth, superior to those with no credentials whatsoever. We can benefit from a study of biblical history and archaeology to add credibility to our position. There are many excellent books on these subjects.

Lastly, the provision of good Christian books and tapes that would be relevant to the person you are dealing with can free you from attempting to be an authority on everything, and open the person up to the world of sound Christian literature.

---

<sup>156</sup> T.F.Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction*, p.27-29, Handsel Press, 1989. U.K.

## **Bibliography** 134.

Ankerberg. J, & Weldon.J, article - Facts on the New Age Movement, Charisma magazine, 1989.

Ankerberg. J & Weldon .J, Encyclopaedia of New Age Beliefs, Harvest House, Grand Rapids, Oregon,1996.

Armerding C. and Gasque W. ed. Dreams, Visions and Oracles, Newport, U.K., 1977.

Abbott. Edwin, Flatland, Pivot, N.Y. 1972.

Bavinck. H.,Our Reasonable Faith, Baker House, 1977.

Bodine Marion, Christian Research Newsletter, Bible Answer Man; May-June 1992

Bruce.F.F.,The Scrolls and the Parchments, Patnoster Press, U.K., 1983.

Battles Ford Lewis, Analysis of the Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin, Baker House, 1980.

Barth. K. ,The Latin Heresy, S/T, Vol. 39, No. 4,1986, pages 289-309.

Bingham .G.,The Clash of the Kingdoms, New Creation, South Australia, 1991.

135.

Bingham. G. ,True God or New Guru - New Creation, South Australia, 1985.

Bingham. G., The Dominion of Darkness and the Victory of God , New Creation, South Australia, 1987.

Bowman R.M. Understanding Jehovah's Witnesses, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1991.

Bowman R.M., Is Jesus a true or False God, Christian Research Journal, Winter-Spring 1990.

Bussell Harold L, Unholy Devotion, Bethany Fellowship, U.S.A., 1977.

Breese. D., Know the Marks of a Cult, Victory, U.S.A., 1979.

Bell.M. Charles, Calvin and Scottish Theology, The Handset Press, 1985.

Brunner.Emil,The Christian Doctrine of God Dogmatics: Vol. I ,Westminster Press, 1950.

Calvin.J., Institutes of the Christian Religion, The Library of Christian Classics, ed. J.T. McNeill, SCM, 1990.

Calvin.J., Theological Treatises, The Library of Christian Classics, Vol XXII, ed K.S. Ritzid, 1954 in Commentaries, VOI. XXIII, ed. Haroltniall, SCM, 1955.

Capps. C.,The Tongue a Creative Force, U.S.A.,Victory, 1976.

136.

- Crete Benjamin, The reappearance of the Christ, Tara Foundation, London, 1983.
- Dyrness W., The Age of Aquarius, Baker House, Grand Rapids, 1985.
- Dietrich Ritschl, The Logic of Theology, SCM, 1986.
- George Yule, 'Luther Attack on the Latin Heresy' in Christ in our Place, ed. by T. Hart & D. Thimell, (Paternoster Press: 1989), pages 224-252.
- Gross, E., The Ouija Board, New Canaan, Pivot, 1978.
- Gross, E., Cults and the Occult in the Age of Aquarius, Pivot, U.S. 1979.
- Gasson, Raphael. The Challenging Counterfeit, Logos, U.S.,1977.
- Gregory of Nanzianzus, On Holy Baptism, oration xl. 41, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, first series., SCM, 1978,
- Hart. T., Humankind in Christ and Christ in Humankind: Salvation as participation in Our Substitute in the Theology of John Calvin, in S/T, Vol. 42, No. 1, 1989, pages 67-84.
- Hunt. D. and T.A. McMahon., The Seduction of Christianity, Harvest House, U.S.A., 1987
- Hunt.D., Beyond Seduction, Harvest House, U.S.A., 1987.
- Heftmann. E., Dark Side of the Moonies, Penguin, U.S.A., 1984.  
137.
- Hatch. Nathan .O., The Democratisation of American Christianity , Yale University Press, New Haven, 1989.
- H.H. Rowley, How not to Translate the Bible, The Expository Times,no.4. 1953.
- Knox D. B., The Everlasting God , Evangelical Press, England, 1982.
- Keel.J., UFO's Operation Trojan Horse, London, Abacus, 1973.
- Koch. K. Between Christ and Satan. Kregal, Grand Rapids, 1962.
- Koch Kurt, Occult Bondage and Deliverance, Kregal, Grand Rapids, 1969.
- Koch Kurt, The Devil's Alphabet, Kregal, Grand Rapids, 1969.
- Kirban. S., Satan's Angels Exposed, Kirian, U.S.A., 1978.
- Lewis C.S., God in the Dock, W.M.B.Eerdmans Publishing Co., U.S.A.,1970.
- Montgomery J. Principalities and Powers. Minneapolis, Dimension Books. 1975.
- Martin. W.,The Kingdom of the Cults ,Bethany Fellowship, U.S.A., 1977.
- McDowell. J., Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Campus Crusade for Christ Int., U.S.A., 1982.
- Orr. J., The Progress of Dogma, James Clarke & Co., 1987.  
138.
- Packer J.I., An Introduction to the Christian Faith, Lion Publishing, Lynx Communications, England, 1992.
- Petersen, W., Those Curious New Cults, New Canaan, Pivot, 1975.

Rhodes R., Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses, Harvest House Publishers, Oregon, 1993.

Reed .D., Jehovah's Witnesses Answered verse by verse, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1992.

Reymond R.L., Jesus Divine Messiah, the New Testament Witness, Presbyterian and Reformed, Phillipsburg, N.J. 1990.

Sire. J.W., Scripture Twisting, IVP, U.S.A., 1986.

Sanders .J.O., Cults and Ism's, Bethany Fellowship, U.S.A., 1987.

Smith, J.H.,ed., The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville,1992.

Sparks. J., The Mind Benders, Nelson, U.S.A., 1981.

Thomas, F.W. Kingdom of Darkness, Plainfield, Logos, 1975.

Torrance. James B, Covenant or Contract? A Study of the Theological Background of Worship in Seventeenth-Century Scotland' in S/T, Vol 28, No.1, 1970.  
139.

Torrance.T.F., Theology in Reconstruction, Handsel Press, 1989. U.K.

Torrance.T.F.,The Deposit of Faith, in the Scottish Journal of Theology,Vol. 36, No. 1, 1983, pages 1-28;

Torrance. Alan. article, Narcissism and the Gospel of Grace, In SJT, Vol.40,

The Greater World Christian Spiritualist League, "Belief and Pledge of the G.W.C.S.L.",1976, London,U.K.

Townsend H.G.ed., The Philosophy of Jonathan Edward's from His private notebooks, Greenwood Press, 1977.

Tucker, R. Another Gospel, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, , 1989.

Warefield.B.B., Biblical and Theological Studies, Presbyterian and Reformed publishing Co., Phillipsburg, N.J. 1968.

Warefield, B.B.,The Person and Work of Christ, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 1950.

Wethers P.G. ed Eric Pement, Answering the Arguments of Jehovah's Witnesses Against the Trinity, Contend for the Faith, Chicago, Emnr, 1992.

Walvoord, J.A.,The Revelation of Jesus Christ, Moody Press, Chicago,1980.

Wilburn G. The Fortune Sellers. S.U. Press, London, 1972.

140.

Weldon. J., UFO's: What on Earth Is Happening, N.Y.Bantam Books, 1989,

White .E. G."The Great Controversy". - Pacific Press, U.S.A. 1978.

**The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Publications**

The Book of Morman , Church of Jesus Christ, Salt Lake City, 1989.



Le Grand Richards, A Marvelous Work and a Wonder. , Deseret Books, Salt Lake City, 1985.

Doctrines of Salvation, vol.1, Salt lake City. 1975.

McConkie Bruce.R., Mormon Doctrine, second edition, Bookcraft, Salt lake City, Utah,1966.

Doctrine and Covenants, 1835 ed., Church of Jesus Christ, Salt Lake City.

Journal of Discourses, vol 2, Church of Jesus Christ, Salt Lake City.

Talmuge J.E.,The Articles of Faith, Church of Jesus Christ, Salt Lake City, 1952.

Times and Seasons, vol.5., Nauvoo, Ill.;1839-46.- a Mormon periodical.

Joseph Fielding Smith, ed, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Co. , 1977.

**Jehovahs Witness Publications 141.**

Should you believe in the Trinity?. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, (1989).

The Divine Name that will endure forever, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, (1984).

Aid to Bible Understanding, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, (1971).

The New World Translation of the Bible, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn,1989.

Let God Be True., Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, 1952.

Reasoning from the Scriputres, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, 1952

Mankinds Search for God, Watchtower Book and Tract Society, Brooklyn, 1990.

Studies in the Scriptures, 7 vol's, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, 1917,

You can live forever in Paradise on Earth, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn,1982.

142.

Things in which it is impossible for God to Lie, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn,1965.

All Scripture is Inspired of God and Beneficial, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, 1982.

Revelation - It's Grand Climax at Hand, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, 1982.

Service Year Report of Jehovah's Witnesses Worldwide,1981, 1996, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.