

The “Eternal” Three
&
“The LORD our God,
the LORD is one!”

A Bible Study on the Eternal Godhead

Godhead Study Part 4

Compiled by Dan Augsburger

Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Deuteronomy 6:4 (NKJV) “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”

*“The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the eternal Godhead...”
Ellen G. White, Manuscript 45, 1904.16*

Introduction

This part of the multi-part Bible study on the Godhead looks at various passages where the “Three” are listed together, establishing the presence and joint activity of three separate entities in the Godhead, and then integrating the “Three” with the “LORD our God, the LORD is one” found in Deuteronomy 6:4. The three distinct Persons and “the LORD is one” are completely compatible.

We will first look at the Three Persons of the Godhead, follow with the “Three” in the writings of Ellen White, the Godhead as portrayed in Deuteronomy 6:4 and finally consider a few questions.

We go forward acknowledging there is much that we do not understand: “Let human beings consider that by all their searching they can never interpret God. When the redeemed shall be pure and clean to come into His presence, they will understand that all that has reverence to the eternal God, the unapproachable God, cannot be represented in figures.” Manuscript 223 1902.17.

We also go forward sobered by the realization that we can make decisions and come to understandings contrary to the teachings of the Scripture.

Please know that I intend no lack of reverence by referring to the distinct Persons of the Godhead as the “Eternal Three” or the “Three” in these studies. As you will quickly discover, there are so many positive references to the “Three” attached to other descriptors in the writings of Ellen White—“Three great and glorious heavenly characters” for example—that the expression “The Three” is communicated with joy and fervent appreciation to the Persons who have done and still do so much for all of us.

Unless indicated otherwise, quotations come from the writings of Mrs. White. The scriptures with asterisks (*) indicate important references.

Do you have feedback and suggestions on these studies? I would love to hear from you. Do you have questions? Would you like to receive more information? Are you interested in a future compilation of the writings of Ellen White on the subject? Please write: discipleheart@protonmail.com or call 269 471 5415.

You can also find more information on the Godhead at my website discipleheart.com. There are more than 700 pages of resources there on a wide variety of subjects.

Dan Augsburger

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The Bible Study

1 We stand on holy ground!

2 *Exodus 3:5 “And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes
3 from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

4 Romans 11:33 “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and
5 knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways
6 past finding out!”

7 *Deuteronomy 29:29 “The secret things belong unto the LORD our
8 God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our
9 children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”¹

10 There are three persons in the Eternal Godhead.

11 *Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing
12 them

13 in the name of the Father², and of the Son³, and of the Holy Ghost.⁴”

14 “The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”

15 *Deuteronomy 6:4 (NKJV) “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the
16 LORD is one!”

17 *Though this only comes in the final study, this is one of the most*
18 *important topics we can look at. Before we consider “the LORD is*
19 *one” we will consider where the Eternal “Three” are mentioned*
20 *together in the Scriptures as well as the writings of Ellen White. The*
21 *evidence is compelling for Three Distinct Persons in the Eternal*

1 “In regard to entering into the subject of the divine mystery of the essence of God, Christ ever maintained a wise reserve.” White, Manuscript 45, 1900.10. “In regard to the personality and prerogatives of God, where He is, and what He is, this is a subject which we are not to dare to touch. On this theme silence is eloquence.” Ellen White, Manuscript 132, 1903.31. “God is to be acknowledged more from what He does not reveal of Himself than from that which is open to our limited comprehension. If men could comprehend the unsearchable wisdom of God and could explain that which He has done or can do, they would no longer give Him reverence or fear His power. In divine revelation God has given to men mysteries that are incomprehensible, to command their faith. This must be so. If the ways and works of God could be explained by finite minds, He would not stand as supreme. Men may be ever searching, ever inquiring, ever learning, and yet there is an infinite beyond.” Manuscript 4, 1882.13.

2 “God is the eternal, self-existent One ... God is a person.” Manuscript 137, 1903.4.

3 “Christ is equal with God, infinite and omnipotent ... the eternal, self-existing Son.” *Youth’s Instructor*, June 21, 1900, par. 2.

4 “The Holy Spirit ... must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God.” Manuscript 20, 1906.32.

22 *Godhead.⁵ Then we will look at “the LORD is one” and consider why*
23 *the portrayal of the “One” aspect is so important to our overall*
24 *understanding of the Godhead, and why we can legitimately speak of*
25 *the “only true God” without losing the distinct Three Persons that*
26 *make up the Godhead.*

27 The “Three” in the Scriptures

28 *There are numerous references to the “Three” throughout the*
29 *Scriptures.*

30 There are clear references to the “Three” in the Old
31 Testament.

32 *Because the Old Testament is not as explicit in revealing the three Per-*
33 *sons of Godhead as the New Testament, sometimes an Old Testament*
34 *Scripture is paired to a New Testament Scripture; sometimes the evi-*
35 *dence is based on two of the Persons rather than all three; and some-*
36 *times only an allusion to the plurality in the Godhead is provided.*

37 Numbers 6:24-26 “The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: 25 The
38 LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: 26
39 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

40 Compare

41 2 Cor. 13:14 “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
42 and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.”

43 Psalms 45:6-7 “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of
44 thy kingdom is a right sceptre. 7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest
45 wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of
46 gladness above thy fellows.”

47 Compare

48 Hebrews 1:8-9 “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for
49 ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
50 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God,
51 even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy
52 fellows.”

5 “The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the eternal Godhead....” Manuscript 45, 1904.16.

53 Psalms 110:1-2 “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right
54 hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

55 Compare

56 Hebrews 1:8,13 “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for
57 ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
58 ... 13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right
59 hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?”

60 *Isaiah 11:1-3 (NKJV) “There shall come forth a Rod from the stem
61 of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the
62 LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
63 The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the
64 fear of the LORD. 3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He
65 shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of
66 His ears.

67 Isaiah 34:16 “Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one
68 of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath
69 commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.”

70 *Isaiah 42:1 (NKJV) “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect
71 One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He
72 will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.”

73 *Isaiah 48:16-17 “Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not
74 spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there
75 am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me. 17 Thus
76 saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the
77 LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by
78 the way that thou shouldest go.”

79 *Isaiah 61:1-2 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the
80 LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath
81 sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the
82 captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To
83 proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance
84 of our God; to comfort all that mourn.”

85 Isaiah 63:7-14 “I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and
86 the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath
87 bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel,
88 which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and
89 according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. 8 For he said,
90 Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their

91 Saviour. 9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his
92 presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
93 and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. 10 But they
94 rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their
95 enemy, and he fought against them. 11 Then he remembered the days
96 of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them
97 up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put
98 his holy Spirit within him? 12 That led them by the right hand of
99 Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make
100 himself an everlasting name? 13 That led them through the deep, as an
101 horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? 14 As a beast
102 goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest:
103 so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.”

104 Malachi 3:1 “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare
105 the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come
106 to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight
107 in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.”

108 The Old Testament “Plurals” provide additional evidence.

109 *The verses that follow point to the Godhead and provide precious un-*
110 *derstandings. Though they are weaker evidence in confirming the*
111 *Godhead, they are based on the word ’ēlôhîym, which is a commonly*
112 *used word for God in the Old Testament. Though ’ēlôhîym is neither*
113 *singular or dual, rather plural—Hebrew recognizes singular, dual*
114 *and plural, the latter referring to three or more—’ēlôhîym also de-*
115 *scribes a wide variety of other entities, including individuals (Psalm*
116 *82:6), angels (Psalm 8:6), and false gods (Exodus 20:23), these verses*
117 *still provide important evidence. Sometimes mistakenly considered*
118 *“plurals of majesty,” the verses are not such “plurals” since the*
119 *Scriptures contain no evidence that any king used such a “plural.”*
120 *Our understanding of the Godhead is not dependent on these “plu-*
121 *rals,” there being more than sufficient evidence in other ways.⁶*

122 *Genesis 1:26a “And God said, Let us make man in our image.”

123 *Genesis 3:22 “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become
124 as one of us, to know good and evil.”

125 Genesis 11:7 “Go to, let us go down, and there confound their

6 See Norman Gulley, “Trinity in the Old Testament,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 17:1 (Spring 2006) Trinity Issue., 84,85, and Daniel Bediako, “God in 3 Persons—in the Old Testament,” BRI, (Release 10), to learn more about these plurals.

126 language, that they may not understand one another's speech.”

127 Isaiah 6:8 “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”

128 There are references to the “Three” in the New
129 Testament.

130 *Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy
131 Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall
132 overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of
133 thee shall be called the Son of God.”

134 Luke 2:25-27 “And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose
135 name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for
136 the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it
137 was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see
138 death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the
139 Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus,
140 to do for him after the custom of the law.”

141 *Luke 3:21-22 “Now when all the people were baptized, it came to
142 pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was
143 opened, 22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a
144 dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art
145 my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”

146 Matthew 3:16-17 “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up
147 straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto
148 him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting
149 upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved
150 Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

151 *Luke 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath
152 anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal
153 the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and
154 recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
155 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

156 *John 3:33-35 “He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal
157 that God is true. 34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of
158 God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. 35 The Father
159 loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.”

160 *John 14:16 “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another
161 Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.”

162 John 14:26 “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the
163 Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring

164 all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

165 *John 15:26 “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto
166 you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from
167 the Father, he shall testify of me.”

168 John 20:20-22 “And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his
169 hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the
170 Lord. 21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my
171 Father hath sent me, even so send I you. 22 And when he had said this,
172 he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy
173 Ghost.”

174 *Acts 2:38-39 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized
175 every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,
176 and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is
177 unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as
178 many as the Lord our God shall call.”

179 *Acts 10:38 “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy
180 Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all
181 that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”

182 Romans 5:1,5 “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with
183 God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ... 5 And hope maketh not
184 ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the
185 Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

186 Romans 8:2-3 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath
187 made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could
188 not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son
189 in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

190 Romans 8:9-11 “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be
191 that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit
192 of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is
193 dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11
194 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in
195 you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your
196 mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

197 *Romans 8:16-17 “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,
198 that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of
199 God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that
200 we may be also glorified together.”

201 Romans 14:17-18 “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but
202 righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in

203 these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of
204 men.”

205 Romans 15:12-13 “And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of
206 Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the
207 Gentiles trust. 13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace
208 in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the
209 Holy Ghost.”

210 1 Corinthians 6:15,19 “Know ye not that your bodies are the members
211 of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the
212 members of an harlot? God forbid. ... 19 What? know ye not that your
213 body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have
214 of God, and ye are not your own?

215 1 Corinthians 12:3-6 “Wherefore I give you to understand, that no
216 man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no
217 man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 4 Now
218 there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are
219 differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are
220 diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in
221 all.”

222 *2 Corinthians 1:21-22 “Now he which stablisheth us with you in
223 Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22 Who hath also sealed us, and
224 given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

225 2 Corinthians 3:3-4 “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be
226 the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with
227 the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables
228 of the heart. 4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward.”

229 *2 Corinthians 13:14 “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love
230 of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.
231 Amen.”

232 Galatians 6:8, 14-15 “For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh
233 reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap
234 life everlasting. ... 14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the
235 cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto
236 me, and I unto the world.”

237 Ephesians 1:3-4 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
238 Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly
239 places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the
240 foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame
241 before him in love. ... 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory,

242 who first trusted in Christ. 13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye
243 heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also
244 after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”

245 *Ephesians 2:18 “For through him we both have access by one Spirit
246 unto the Father.”

247 Ephesians 2:20-22 “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles
248 and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In
249 whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy
250 temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an
251 habitation of God through the Spirit.”

252 Ephesians 3:5, 8-9 “Which in other ages was not made known unto the
253 sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets
254 by the Spirit. ... 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is
255 this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the
256 unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men see what is the
257 fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath
258 been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

259 *Ephesians 3:14-16 “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of
260 our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and
261 earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of
262 his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner
263 man.”

264 Ephesians 4:4-6 “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are
265 called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
266 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in
267 you all.”

268 Ephesians 4:30-32 “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye
269 are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath,
270 and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with
271 all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving
272 one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

273 Ephesians 5:18-20 “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess;
274 but be filled with the Spirit; 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and
275 hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart
276 to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the
277 Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

278 Philippians 3:3 “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in
279 the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the
280 flesh.”

281 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5 “We give thanks to God always for you all,
282 making mention of you in our prayers; 3 Remembering without
283 ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in
284 our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; 4 Knowing,
285 brethren beloved, your election of God. 5 For our gospel came not
286 unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and
287 in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among
288 you for your sake.”

289 *1 Thessalonians 5:18-19 “In every thing give thanks: for this is the
290 will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 19 Quench not the Spirit.”

291 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 “But we are bound to give thanks alway to
292 God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the
293 beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit
294 and belief of the truth: 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to
295 the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

296 2 Timothy 1:8-9 “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of
297 our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions
298 of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us,
299 and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but
300 according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ
301 Jesus before the world began, ... 13 Hold fast the form of sound words,
302 which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.
303 14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy
304 Ghost which dwelleth in us.”

305 Titus 3:4-5 “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour
306 toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have
307 done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of
308 regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

309 Hebrews 9:14 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who
310 through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge
311 your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

312 *1 Peter 1:2 “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,
313 through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of
314 the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”

315 1 Peter 1:16-17,21-22 “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.
316 17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons
317 judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your
318 sojourning here in fear: ... 21 Who by him do believe in God, that
319 raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and

320 hope might be in God. 22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in
321 obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the
322 brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”

323 *1 John 4:13-15 “Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us,
324 because he hath given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and do
325 testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. 15
326 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in
327 him, and he in God.”

328 Jude 1:20-21 “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most
329 holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, 21 Keep yourselves in the love
330 of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal
331 life.”

332 *Revelation 2:7 “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith
333 unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree
334 of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

335 Revelation 2:27-29 “And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the
336 vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received
337 of my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 He that hath
338 an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

339 Revelation 3:5-6 “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in
340 white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,
341 but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6
342 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the
343 churches.”

344 Revelation 3:12-13 “12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in
345 the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write
346 upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God,
347 which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my
348 God: and I will write upon him my new name. 13 He that hath an ear,
349 let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

350 Revelation 3:21-22 “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me
351 in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my
352 Father in his throne. 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the
353 Spirit saith unto the churches.”

354 Revelation 14:12-13 “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they
355 that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. 13 And I
356 heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead
357 which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they
358 may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

359 Revelation 21:10, 22-23 “And he carried me away in the spirit to a
360 great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy
361 Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. ... 22 And I saw no
362 temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the
363 temple of it. 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the
364 moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb
365 is the light thereof.”

366 *The “Three” in the Writings of Ellen White*

367 *Evidence of the “Three” in the writings of Ellen White is compelling,*
368 *though little known! She speaks of the “Three” in undeniable ways.*
369 *These quotes were introduced in the study on the Holy Spirit. This*
370 *listing is accordingly shorter. The quotes are arranged topically, and*
371 *reveal the ongoing work of the Three Persons. The perspectives*
372 *provided on the united work of the Members of the Godhead are*
373 *wonderful and transformative, particularly relating to baptism.*

374 Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them
375 in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

376 The “Three” are carefully defined.

377 **“The Father is all the fulness of the Godhead bodily and is invisible*
378 *to mortal sight. The Son is all the fulness of the Godhead manifested.*
379 *The Word of God declares Him to be “the express image of His*
380 *person.” [Hebrews 1:3.] “God so loved the world that He gave His*
381 *only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish,*
382 *but have everlasting life.” [John 3:16.] Here is shown the personality*
383 *of the Father. The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He*
384 *ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fulness of the Godhead,*
385 *making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and*
386 *believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons*
387 *of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the*
388 *Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by*
389 *living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the*
390 *obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in*
391 *Christ.” Manuscript 21, 1906.9-11.*

392 The Godhead—the “Three”—worked together on the plan of
393 redemption.

394 “The Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—were
395 working in behalf of man. Every power in the heavenly universe was

396 put into activity to carry forward the plan of redemption. Ellen White,
397 Manuscript 47, 1901.6.

398 **“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the*
399 *Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the*
400 *plan of redemption. In order to fully carry out this plan, it was decided*
401 *that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give Himself an*
402 *offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love?”* Letter
403 12, 1901.10.

404 *“Christ came to this world and stood before men with the hoarded love*
405 *of eternity. The whole ocean of divine love was flowing forth from its*
406 *great center. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were working in*
407 *behalf of man. Every power in the heavenly universe was put into*
408 *activity to carry forward the plan of redemption.”* *Review and Herald,*
409 January 7, 1902, Art. A, par. 7.

410 *“The three representative powers of the Godhead, the Father, the Son,*
411 *and the Holy Spirit, were pledged to carry out God’s plan for the*
412 *salvation of the lost race.”* Manuscript 139, 1907.10.

413 The “Three” will be worshipped in heaven.

414 **“As the saints in the kingdom of God are accepted in the beloved,*
415 *they hear: “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom*
416 *prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”* [Matthew 25:34.]
417 *And then the golden harps are touched, and the music flows all*
418 *through the heavenly host, and they fall down and worship the Father*
419 *and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”* Manuscript 139, 1906.32.

420 The Eternal Godhead support the human agent.

421 *“The work of salvation is not a small matter, but so vast that the*
422 *highest authorities are taken hold of by the expressed faith of the*
423 *human agency. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the eternal*
424 *Godhead is involved in the action required to make assurance to the*
425 *human agent to unite all heaven to contribute to the exercise of human*
426 *faculties to reach and embrace the fulness of the threefold powers to*
427 *unite in the great work appointed, confederating the heavenly powers*
428 *with the human, that men may become, through heavenly efficiency,*
429 *partakers of the divine nature and workers together with Christ.”*
430 Manuscript 45, 1904.16.

431 *“How many will today pledge themselves to serve God with heart and*
432 *mind and strength? Do you not want God and Christ and the Holy*
433 *Spirit to co-operate with you? They are pledged to do this if you will*

434 keep your covenant with God.” Manuscript 50, 1904.45.

435 The “Three” are referenced when speaking of neglecting the work.

436 **“To neglect this work is to insult Jehovah, to grieve the Holy Spirit,*
437 *and to prove disloyal to Christ.”* *Review and Herald*, July 18, 1899,
438 Art. A, par. 7.

439 Uniting with the Three Divine Instrumentalities brings wisdom from
440 above.

441 “Those who unite with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who
442 show by their lives that they are no longer following the course they
443 followed before they united with these divine instrumentalities, will
444 receive wisdom from above. ” Manuscript 11, 1901.8.

445 We are to cooperate with the Three Highest Powers of heaven.

446 “Keep yourselves where the three great powers of heaven—the Father,
447 the Son, and the Holy Spirit—can be your efficiency. These powers
448 work with the man who gives himself unreservedly to God, heart and
449 soul, and mind and strength.” Letter 102, 1903.11.

450 **“We are to co-operate with the three highest powers in heaven—the*
451 *Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these powers will work*
452 *through us, making us workers together with God.”* Letter 253a,
453 1903.18.

454 The “Three” are often listed in the same sentence.

455 “Let an abiding Christ live in the soul, and we shall show far greater
456 wisdom than we have done. We shall know more of God and of Jesus
457 Christ, and of the Holy Spirit which opens the door for us to advance.
458 We need to manifest the Spirit of Christ. If we have not received all
459 we should have had, shall we now say, “Pay me that thou owest?” It is
460 the Lord’s, and we will say, “Return to God His own.” Letter 43,
461 1899.49.

462 “We are to be engaged in gospel missionary work. We are brought into
463 connection with God, who is the God of all comfort; into fellowship
464 with the Son, who is our Redeemer and the consolation of Israel; and
465 into communion with the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.” Manuscript 185,
466 1898.23.

467 The “Three” are referred to as Personal Dignitaries of Heaven.

468 “We are to “hold fast” and live up to all the light we receive from
469 heaven. Why? Because God wants us to grasp the eternal truth, and act

470 as His helping hand by communicating the light to those who are not
471 acquainted with His love for them. When you gave yourself to Christ,
472 you made a pledge in the presence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy
473 Spirit—the three great personal dignitaries of heaven. “Hold fast” to
474 this pledge.” Manuscript 92, 1901.5.

475 “Christ tells them they were to fight in fellowship with all the children
476 of light; that satanic agencies would combine their forces to extinguish
477 the light of the life of Christ out of their ranks. But they were not left
478 to fight the battles in their own human strength; that the angelic host
479 coming as ministers of God would be in that battle, and also there
480 would be the eternal heavenly dignitaries—God, and Christ, and the
481 Holy Spirit—arming them with more than mortal energy, and [who]
482 would advance with them to the work, and convince the world of sin.”
483 Manuscript 130, 1901.52.

484 The “Three” are mentioned when Christ promised the help of the Holy
485 Spirit.

486 “Christ promised His disciples that He would send them the Holy
487 Spirit, who would bring all these things to their remembrance. “The
488 Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my
489 name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your
490 remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Manuscript 15,
491 1898.10.

492 “What a salvation is revealed in the covenant by which God promised
493 to be our Father, His <only begotten> Son our Redeemer, and the Holy
494 Spirit our Comforter, Counsellor, and Sanctifier. Upon no lower
495 ground than this is it safe for us to place our feet.” Manuscript 15,
496 1898.20.

497 The “Three” provide power to overcome.

498 *“Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy
499 Spirit. It is the fulfilment of the covenant that God has made with
500 those who bind themselves up with Him, to stand with Him, with His
501 Son, and with His Spirit in holy fellowship. Have you been born
502 again? Have you become a new being in Christ Jesus? Then co-
503 operate with the three great powers of heaven who are working in your
504 behalf. Doing this you will reveal to the world the principles of
505 righteousness.” *Signs of the Times*, June 19, 1901, par. 4.

506 “I beseech those who claim to believe that Jesus has died for them,
507 those who have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and
508 the Holy Ghost, to come to Christ, believing that He will give them

509 power to resist the enemy. If by our compassion and generosity, by our
510 kind, tender words, we manifested His sweet Spirit, His righteousness,
511 we should truly be lights in the world.” Manuscript 102, 1901.9.

512 “No requirement is laid upon man that Christ has not obeyed. We can
513 overcome as He overcame, if we will avail ourselves of the help of the
514 three great powers of heaven, who are waiting to answer the demand
515 made upon them by God’s people for power to defeat satanic
516 agencies.” Manuscript 181, 1905.10.

517 *“The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the three holy dignitaries
518 of heaven, have declared that they will strengthen men to overcome
519 the powers of darkness. All the facilities of heaven are pledged to
520 those who by their baptismal vows have entered into a covenant with
521 God.” Manuscript 92, 1901.26.

522 The “Three” long for channels to communicate through.

523 “The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are seeking and longing for
524 channels through which to communicate the divine principles of truth
525 to the world.” Letter 43, 1901.8.

526 The Three Highest Authorities in the universe call persons teaching
527 the commandments great.

528 “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not
529 come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven
530 and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law,
531 till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least
532 commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in
533 the kingdom of heaven (by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost):
534 but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great
535 (by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost) in the kingdom of
536 heaven.’ The three highest authorities in the universe, with all the
537 heavenly family, shall call great, in the fullest sense of the term, those
538 who do and teach the commandments of our heavenly Father.”
539 Manuscript 129, 1907.28.

540 The three members of the Godhead cooperated in bringing our
541 salvation.

542 “The condescension of the highest powers of heaven to unite as co-
543 workers in the great field opening before us in our world in
544 evangelical enterprises, does not abate one jot or one tittle from His
545 prerogatives as Jehovah. Through the infinite sacrifice of God’s only
546 begotten Son, His gift to the world to pay the ransom for man, we are

547 placed on vantage ground. Through His imputed merits alone can man
548 become as Paul expressed it a laborer together with God. “Ye are
549 God’s husbandry,” he said, “Ye are God’s building.” [1 Corinthians
550 3:9.] Under the Spirit’s working we are to bear fruit to God’s glory, as
551 the ground when cultivated yields its fruits. ‘Ye are God’s building.’”
552 Letter 20, 1899.6.

553 *“After the believing soul has received the ordinance of baptism, he is
554 to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy
555 Spirit. These three all co-operate in the great work of the covenant
556 made by baptism in the sight of the heavenly universe. The Father, the
557 Son, and the Holy Spirit receive the believing soul into covenant
558 relation with God.” Manuscript 56, 1900.26.

559 The “Three” were present at Christ’s baptism.

560 Luke 3:21-22 “Now when all the people were baptized, it came to
561 pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was
562 opened, 22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a
563 dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art
564 my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”

565 There are numerous statements that have to do with baptism.

566 *“The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, powers infinite and omni-
567 scient, receive those who truly enter into covenant relation with God.
568 They are present at every baptism, to receive the candidates who have
569 renounced the world and have received Christ into the soul temple.
570 These candidates have entered into the family of God, and their names
571 are inscribed in the Lamb’s book of life.” Manuscript 27a, 1900.10.7.

572 “After the believing soul has received the ordinance of baptism, he is
573 to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy
574 Spirit. These three all co-operate in the great work of the covenant
575 made by baptism in the sight of the heavenly universe. The Father, the
576 Son, and the Holy Spirit receive the believing soul into covenant
577 relation with God.” Manuscript 56, 1900.26.

578 “Let every soul be careful how he shall conduct himself after he has
579 made his profession before many witnesses. Who are these witnesses?
580 The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and all the heavenly universe
581 are witnesses of that burial in the water in the likeness of Christ’s

7 Manuscript 95, 1906 is an especially important document to read on baptism, for it reveals the united activities of the members of the Godhead who enter into covenant with the one being baptized.

582 death. Those who have been truly converted have been buried with
583 Christ in the likeness of His death, and raised from the watery grave in
584 the likeness of His resurrection, to walk in newness of life. By faithful
585 obedience to the truth these are to make their calling and election
586 sure.” Manuscript 57, 1900.21.

587 “At the baptismal ceremony we virtually take a most solemn oath in
588 the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, that
589 henceforth our lives will be merged into the life of these three great
590 individual Agencies; that the life we now live in the flesh we will live
591 in faithful obedience to God’s sacred and holy law, keeping all His
592 statutes and His commandments; that we will live in newness of life as
593 men and women having a new birth unto God.” Manuscript 68,
594 1900.12.

595 Additional titles for the “Three.”⁸

596 “Three highest powers in the universe.” *Review and Herald*, August
597 12, 1909, par. 3.

598 “Three great heavenly powers.” Manuscript 192, 1903.22; Manuscript
599 186, 1907.7.

600 “Three great Worthies in heaven.” Manuscript 95, 1906.13;
601 Manuscript 145, 1906.12.

602 “Three mighty powers.” Manuscript 229, 1902.23; Manuscript 142,
603 1906.50.

604 “Three great infinite powers.” *General Conference Bulletin*, April 4,
605 1901, Art. A, par. 16.

606 “Eternal heavenly dignitaries.” Manuscript 130, 1901.52.

607 “Three great and glorious heavenly characters.” Manuscript 45,
608 1904.18.

609 “Three great authorities of heaven.” Manuscript 177, 1907.15.

610 “Three great personal dignitaries of heaven.” Manuscript 92 1901.5.

611 “Three highest authorities in the universe.” Manuscript 129, 1907.28.

612 “Three highest authorities of the heavenly courts.” Manuscript 87,
613 1902.36.

614 “Three holiest beings in heaven.” Manuscript 95, 1906.29.

615 “Three living persons of the heavenly trio.” Manuscript 21, 1906.11.

⁸ You will find a longer exhaustive list of these titles in the study on the Holy Spirit.

616 “Three representative powers of the Godhead.” Manuscript 139,
617 1907.10.

618 “The LORD Our God, the LORD is One”

619 Deuteronomy 6:4 (NKJV) “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the
620 LORD is one!”

621 Introduction

622 *The Bible not only speaks of the Three Persons of the Godhead, it also*
623 *asserts “The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” The “Three,” which*
624 *we have already studied, and the “LORD is one,” which we are about*
625 *to study, are perfectly compatible. Because there are efforts to negate*
626 *the “Three” in some quarters, in favor of various other understand-*
627 *ings, the first three parts of this series of studies, and the first sections*
628 *of this fourth part, have sought to clearly establish the scriptural foun-*
629 *ation for Three distinct co-equal, divine, eternal Persons in the God-*
630 *head. Having hopefully succeeded in that effort, understanding the the*
631 *“LORD our God, the LORD is one” is our next objective.*

632 *When we speak of the “Lord is one,” we are still speaking of the eter-*
633 *nal Godhead that consists of three persons. Though there are three*
634 *distinct Persons (plural, meaning more than one) we describe them as*
635 *members of the “Godhead” (singular) never as “Godheads” (plural).*
636 *We also baptize “in the name” (singular) of the Father, Son and Holy*
637 *Ghost,”⁹ never in the “names.” In doing so, we are merely stating*
638 *what the Bible teaches on the subject.*

639 *The three Persons, one God paradox is one of the great mysteries of*
640 *the Bible, and is beyond what has been fully revealed in the Scriptures.*
641 *But, as mentioned above, the “Three” and the “Lord is one” are per-*
642 *fectly compatible. To be faithful to the teachings of the Scriptures, we*
643 *must equally accept the teachings regarding the Three Persons and*
644 *those regarding one God. The challenge is integrating them.¹⁰*

9 Matthew 28:19.

10 Find helpful discussions on the Trinity in Gerhard Pfandl, (2003) "The Trinity in Scripture," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*: Vol. 14 : Iss. 2 , Article 5. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jats/vol14/iss2/5/> (accessed April 28, 2021); Woodrow Whidden, “Why the Trinity Is Important,” *The Trinity: Understanding God’s Love, His Plan of Salvation and Christian Relationships* (Hagerstown: Review and Herald, 2002) 243-244; John Reeve, "Why We Don't Worship Three Gods" (2020). *Faculty Publications*. 1204. (<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs/1204/>); Daniel Scarone, *The God We Worship*, (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2011), 101.

645 *Here is the official statement of the church:*

646 “There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-
647 eternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all,
648 and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet
649 known through His self-revelation. God, who is love, is forever wor-
650 thy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation.”¹¹

651 *It is significant that our doctrinal statement does not attempt to ex-
652 plain the “everlasting to everlasting” duration of the Godhead’s exis-
653 tence, nor how “Three” can be “One.” Neither is there any attempt
654 to explain. Discussing this challenge. Kwabena Donkor explains:*

655 “The Bible seems not to go into the issue of how God is One, and we
656 should not either. Just because the Christian tradition dealt with it does
657 not mean we have to do the same. We may state the Bible’s view of
658 God as One and Three without trying to explain it.”¹²

659 “The LORD Our God”

660 *“The LORD Our God” refers to the Godhead made up of Three Per-
661 sons. This is the mysterious paradox already spoken of. Though there
662 are three distinct Persons that make up the Godhead, there are numer-
663 ous verses in the Scriptures that speak of one God. As we will learn,
664 the complete unity between the Persons of the Godhead allows them to
665 be accurately spoken of as a single entity. Though we are not given
666 much information in this regard, at the very least one of the reasons
667 would include their self-effacing humility.*

668 • In the Old and New Testaments are many ongoing statements regard-
669 ing God being spoken of as the “only God” or something like that.

670 *To the Hebrews, who knew little to nothing regarding the distinct per-
671 sons in the Godhead, the injunction to worship the one God was espe-
672 cially comparative in nature, relative to the pagan worship going on
673 around them. Hidden within the assertion of Deuteronomy 6:4, howev-
674 er, was a great and profound truth that we will consider later: that the
675 one God was made up of a unity of Three Persons!*

676 Here are examples of “one God” references.

677 *Deuteronomy 6:4 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one
678 LORD.”

11 <https://www.adventist.org/trinity/> (accessed May 1, 2021)

12 Kwabena Donkor, “God in 3 Persons—in Theology, Biblical Research Institute, Release 09.

679 Deuteronomy 4:35,39 “Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest
680 know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him. ... 39
681 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD
682 he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none
683 else.”

684 *1 Kings 8:60 “That all the peoples of the earth may know that the
685 LORD is God; there is no other.”

686 Isaiah 45:5-6,18 “I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no
687 God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 6 That
688 they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that
689 there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. ... 18
690 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that
691 formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not
692 in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is
693 none else. ... 21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take coun-
694 sel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told
695 it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else be-
696 side me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. 22 Look
697 unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and
698 there is none else.”

699 Zechariah 14:9 “And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that
700 day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.”

701 *Statements regarding “one God” continue through the New Testament.*

702 Mark 12:29 “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the command-
703 ments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord.”

704 John 10:30 “I and my Father are one.”

705 1 Corinthians 8:4 “As concerning therefore the eating of those things
706 that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing
707 in the world, and that there is none other God but one.”

708 Ephesians 4:6 “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and
709 through all, and in you all.”

710 *We cannot fully understand or explain why “one God” is also “Three*
711 *Persons,” but the Bible teaches both, and we must accept the teach-*
712 *ing. Note that accepting the “One,” however, does not diminish or*
713 *negate the “Three”!*

714 Here we list verses revealing the three Members had sim-
715 ilar attributes.

716 • The three Members have eternal existence.

717 *Deuteronomy 33:27 “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath
718 are the everlasting arms.”

719 *Psalms 90:2 “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou
720 hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to ever-
721 lasting, thou art God.”

722 John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before
723 Abraham was, I am.”

724 Hebrews 9:14 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who
725 through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge
726 your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

727 • All three Members are omnipresent.

728 Jeremiah 23:24 “Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not
729 see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the
730 LORD.”

731 Matt. 28:20 “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have
732 commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of
733 the world. Amen.”

734 Psalms 139:7-12 “Whither shall I go from thy spirit?or whither shall I
735 flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:if I
736 make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.9 If I take the wings of the
737 morning,and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there
738 shall thy hand lead me,and thy right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say,
739 Surely the darkness shall cover me;even the night shall be light about
740 me. 12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as
741 the day:the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.”

742 • All three Members are omniscient.

743 *Isaiah 46:9-10 “Remember the former things of old: for I am God,
744 and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declar-
745 ing the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that
746 are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my
747 pleasure.”

748 *John 21:17 “He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas,
749 lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third
750 time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all
751 things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my
752 sheep.”

753 Romans 8:27 “And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the
754 mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints ac-
755 cording to the will of God.”

756 • All three Members are good.

757 Ps. 65:16 “That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless him-
758 self in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear
759 by the God of truth.”

760 Psalms 143:10 “Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy
761 spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.”

762 Acts 3:14 “But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a
763 murderer to be granted unto you.”

764 Nehemiah 9:20 “Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and
765 witheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water
766 for their thirst.”

767 • All three Members exercise sovereign authority.

768 *Psalms 103:19 “The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens;
769 and his kingdom ruleth over all.”

770 Mark 4:39 “And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea,
771 Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.”

772 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same
773 Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same
774 Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God
775 which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given
776 to every man to profit withal. 8 For to one is given by the Spirit the
777 word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;
778 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by
779 the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another
780 prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of
781 tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these wor-
782 keth that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally
783 as he will.”

784 • All three Members participated in creation.

785 Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

786 *John 1:3 “All things were made by him; and without him was not any
787 thing made that was made.”

788 Colossians 1:16-17 “For by him were all things created, that are in
789 heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be

790 thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were cre-
791 ated by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him
792 all things consist.”

793 Genesis 1:2 “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness
794 was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the
795 face of the waters.”

796 • All three Members bring life.

797 John 5:21 “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them;
798 even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.”

799 John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life:
800 no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

801 Romans 8:11 “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the
802 dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also
803 quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

804 • All three Members bring transformation.

805 1 Thessalonians 5:23 “And the very God of peace sanctify you whol-
806 ly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved
807 blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

808 1 Corinthians 1:2 “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to
809 them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that
810 in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs
811 and ours:”

812 Ephesians 3:16 “That he would grant you, according to the riches of
813 his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner
814 man;”

815 • All three Members dwell in believers.

816 Isaiah 57:15” For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eter-
817 nity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him
818 also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the
819 humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

820 Ephesians 3:17 “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;”

821 Romans 8:9-11 “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be
822 that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit
823 of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is
824 dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11
825 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in
826 you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your

827 mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

828 • All three Members are equally God.

829 Ephesians 2:4-8 “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love
830 wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quick-
831 ened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath
832 raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in
833 Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding
834 riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

835 *1 Timothy 3:16 “And without controversy great is the mystery of
836 godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of
837 angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received
838 up into glory.”

839 *Acts 5:3-4 “But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart
840 to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?
841 4 Whilst it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was
842 it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine
843 heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.”

844 What does the “*LORD is one*” mean?

845 *The “One” of Deuteronomy 6:4—’echâd refers to uniqueness and*
846 *unity—a unitary “one”—a unity in diversity of numerous persons,*
847 *such as is found in the marriage relationship between a husband and*
848 *wife, or the unity found in a group of people who have come together*
849 *for a common purpose. There is also another form of “one,” a*
850 *mathematical form, yâchîyd, that refers to an only son or child (Prov*
851 *4:3; Zech 12:10).*¹³

852 • Sample verses with ’echâd.

853 Genesis 2:24 “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother,
854 and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

855 Judges 20:11 “So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city,
856 knit together as one man.”

13 There are two words for “one” in Hebrew: *’echâd* and *yâchîyd*. *’Echâd* refers to the unity in diversity between a man and wife, or the unity in diversity of a group of people who are linked together for some reason (Gen 2:24; 11:6; Judges 20:11; Ezek 37:19). *Yâchîyd* refers to uniqueness, as in an only son or an only child (Prov 4:3; Zech 12:10). For a more complete discussion see Gulley, 83-84. The authors of *Trinity* have a very helpful definition as well: a “oneness that results from a unity of numerous persons.” Find a more complete discussion in W. Whidden, 34.

857 • Sample verses with yâchîyd.

858 Proverbs 4:3 (NKJV) “When I was my father’s son, Tender and the
859 only one in the sight of my mother,”

860 Zechariah 12:10 “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon
861 the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications:
862 and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall
863 mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in
864 bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

865 What is the significance of the “Lord is one” aspect of the
866 Godhead?

867 *In studying this topic, it helps to remember that God is past finding
868 out, His ways are incomprehensible, He defies human reasoning! We
869 must therefore be satisfied with the limited information provided.*

870 • We are touching the essential nature of the Godhead.

871 *When we speak of the mysterious, oneness between the Three Persons
872 of the Godhead, we touch the core of the Godhead. Just as the unity of
873 God’s church is the clearest revelation of the God we represent, so the
874 apparent unity between the Persons of the Godhead provides the
875 clearest information on what the Godhead is all about. Among these
876 elements are love, unity, diversity, humble self-effacement and ongoing
877 submission in a relationship of equals.*

878 • We find loving relationships within the Godhead.

879 *Perfect, loving relationships existed among the Godhead from the
880 beginning. In the course of fulfilling the plan of redemption, Christ
881 gave His life for us, and eventually experienced temporary, heart-
882 breaking separation from His Father. The Father experienced a
883 similar aching separation from His Son. We often forget the personal
884 trauma that the members of the Godhead experienced in this respect.¹⁴
885 There are quotes about the infinite love of the Father for Christ.¹⁵*

886 *John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only
887 begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but
888 have everlasting life.”

889 Matthew 3:17 “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my

14 “God withheld not even the sacrifice of Himself. He gave Himself in His Son. The Father suffered with Christ in all His humiliation and agony” Manuscript 21, 1900.11.

15 “[T]he Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ by receiving and welcoming Christ’s friends as His friends.” *Experiences in Australia*, 259.5.

890 beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

891 Mark 14:36 “And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto
892 thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but
893 what thou wilt.”

894 Matthew 27:46 “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud
895 voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my
896 God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

897 • We find perfect unity!

898 *The three divine Persons of the Godhead are perfectly united in na-*
899 *ture, character, and purpose. The Godhead presents a unity that is so*
900 *complete that it can be correctly expressed in the singular! Though*
901 *they are Three, they are referred to as one God.*¹⁶

902 *John 10:30 “I and my Father are one.”¹⁷

903 John 17:21 “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I
904 in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe
905 that thou hast sent me.”

906 • We find diversity—individuality and personality—in that unity.

907 *There is also diversity in unity. Though they are perfectly united, they*
908 *still have their distinct personalities and specific functions.*¹⁸

909 1 John 1:3 “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you,
910 that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is
911 with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”¹⁹

16 “Those to whom the Lord spoke anciently were in possession of the knowledge of the true God. Their message to the world was the existence of a personal God and the unity between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in carrying forward the great work of redemption in every soul that is emptied of self.” White, Manuscript 78, 1905.20. “Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34.1.

17 “From eternity there was a complete unity between the Father and the Son. They were two, yet little short of being identical; two in individuality, yet one in spirit, and heart, and character.” *Youth Instructor*, December 16, 1897, par. 5.

18 “Christ’s oneness with the Father was a constant joy to God; for He knew that there was in the world one who would not misrepresent Him. In Christ He beheld the reflection of His own character. And it was that His followers might have this same oneness that was Christ’s great desire. For this oneness He prayed.” Letter 317, 1904.6 ... “The oneness existing between the Father and the Son does not affect the distinct personality of each. And though believers are to be one with Christ, their identity and personality is recognized through the whole of this prayer.” Letter 317, 1904.10.

19 “All through the Scriptures, the Father and the Son are spoken of as two distinct personages. You will hear men endeavoring to make the Son of God a nonentity. He and

912 Hebrews 1:1-3 “God, ... 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by
913 his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he
914 made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the ex-
915 press image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his
916 power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right
917 hand of the Majesty on high.”²⁰

918 • We find self-effacing humility.

919 *In the Godhead we find perfect unity between three distinct Persons.*
920 *This could only be possible because the Three are completely rooted in*
921 *humility. In the very first verse in the Bible we find this self-effacing*
922 *humility in the declaration that “God created the heaven and the*
923 *earth.” Though the verse speaks of the work of God creating, the*
924 *actual creator was Christ.²¹ Hidden within the designation “God” are*
925 *“Three” who were present and participated in different ways, but with*
926 *such self-effacing humility and unity that “God created” is an*
927 *accurate description of what happened.²²*

928 *We should also consider that revelation is progressive. For example,*
929 *Christ revealed Himself as “Almighty God” to Abraham, Isaac and*
930 *Jacob, but revealed Himself as YHWH to Moses at the time of*
931 *Exodus.²³ Though the Spirit was very active in the Old Testament,*
932 *more complete information only comes in the New Testament. That*
933 *could explain why the Jewish people who had more limited*
934 *information in Old Testament times focused so much on Deuteronomy*
935 *6:4 and related passages, but would have a more complete*
936 *understanding at the time of Christ’s earthly sojourn.*

937 Genesis 1:1-2 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
938 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon
939 the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the
940 waters.”

the Father are one, but they are two personages.” Manuscript 56, 1905.4.

20 “The position of Jesus Christ in reference to His Father is in these verses [Hebrews 1:1-3] brought to view. While they are one in purpose, and one in mind, yet in personality they are two.” Manuscript 179, 1907.2.

21 John 1:3: “All things were created by Him”; Colossians 1:16: “For by him were all things created”; Hebrews 1:2 “By whom also he made the worlds.”

22 Though Christ was the primary agent of creation, the Father created through Him (Ephesians 3:9), and the Spirit was very present (Genesis 1:2).

23 Exodus 6:2,3. Recall that Christ took over all communication after the fall of man.

941 • There is submission in a relationship of equals.
 942 *Though they are equals, the Father apparently plays the lead role;*
 943 *Christ voluntarily humbled and submitted Himself to the Father, and*
 944 *continues that submission while seated at the right hand of the Father;*
 945 *the Holy Spirit is in voluntary submission to the Father and Christ.*²⁴
 946 *John 4:34 “Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him
 947 that sent me, and to finish his work.”
 948 John 6:38 “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will,
 949 but the will of him that sent me.”
 950 *Hebrews 10:7 “Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it
 951 is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.”
 952 Luke 22:42 “Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from
 953 me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”
 954 John 16:14 “He [Holy Spirit] shall glorify me: for he shall receive of
 955 mine, and shall shew it unto you.”

956 • We also find perfect, other-centered, love.
 957 *The Bible is clear that God not only loves, He is the source of all*
 958 *love!*²⁵
 959 *1 John 4:8 “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”
 960 1 John 1:5 “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and
 961 declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”
 962 Exodus 34:6-7 “And the LORD passed by before him, and pro-
 963 claimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuf-
 964 fering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7 Keeping mercy for thou-
 965 sands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no
 966 means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the
 967 children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the
 968 fourth generation.”
 969 *2 Corinthians 5:19 “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the

24 “The work of the Spirit had been clearly defined by Christ. “He shall not speak of Himself,” He said. “He shall glorify Me.” [John 16:13, 14.] As Christ came to glorify the Father by the revelation of His infinite love, so the Spirit came to glorify Christ.” White, Letter 213, 1903.12.

25 “The Lord has instructed us to call God our Father, to regard him as the fountain of paternal affection, the source of the love that has been flowing from century to century through the channel of the human heart. All the pity, compassion, and love which have been manifested in the earth have emanated from the throne of God, and, compared to the love that dwells in his heart, are as a fountain to an ocean.” White, *Signs of the Times*, March 5, 1896, par. 3.

970 world unto himself.”²⁶

971 • What is the practical application of the unity between the Father and
972 the Son?

973 We should be loving.

974 John 13:35 “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye
975 have love one to another.”

976 We should be united.

977 1 Corinthians 1:10 “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our
978 Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be
979 no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the
980 same mind and in the same judgment.”

981 We must maintain our individuality —diversity.

982 Romans 12:5 “So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every
983 one members one of another.”²⁷

984 We should be humble.

985 Matthew 11:28-30 “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy
986 laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn
987 of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto
988 your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

989 We should appropriately submit to those in rightful authority over us.

990 Luke 9:23 “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let
991 him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”

26 “In Christ the character of the Father was revealed. As children looked upon his countenance, they saw purity and goodness shining forth from his eyes. In his countenance gentleness, meekness, love, and conscious power were combined. But though every word, every gesture, every expression of his face, betokened his divine supremacy, humility marked his deportment and bearing. He came but for one purpose; and that was the salvation of the lost.” *The Youth’s Instructor*, June 23, 1892, par. 3.

27 “By the figure of the vine and the branches, Christ illustrated not only the relation that should exist between Him and His followers, but also the union between every believer and his fellow believer. The branches of the vine are related to each other; but they are not alike. Each has its own individuality, which cannot be merged into that of another, but all have a special connection with each other.” Letter 112, 1907.13.

992

The "Only True" God

993 John 17:3 "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only
994 true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

995 • Some thoughts on the the "Only True" God.

996 *The "Only True" God is not so difficult to understand when*
997 *understood in light of the "LORD is one." But there is more to*
998 *consider.*

999 *Was Jesus really suggesting in John 17:3 that His Father was the only*
1000 *true God, and therefore negating His equal participation in the*
1001 *Godhead and that of the Holy Spirit, and discouraging worship of the*
1002 *two of them?*

1003 • What is the evidence of Scripture and the writings of Ellen White?

1004 *As we have already seen, (1) Christ is clearly spoken of as God in the*
1005 *Old and New Testament, and in the writings of Ellen White. (2) As*
1006 *God, Christ is self-existent. (3) Christ is clearly spoken of as being*
1007 *equal to God in the Old and New Testament, and in the writings of*
1008 *Ellen White. (4) Christ's incarnation and ministry was full of*
1009 *supernatural events. (5) Christ made claims and gave assurances that*
1010 *only a Deity could make and assure. (6) Christ is clearly spoken of as*
1011 *accepting the worship of human beings in the Old and New Testament,*
1012 *and in the writings of Ellen White. (7) We are told that Christ came to*
1013 *earth as man and will ascend to heaven as God. (8) We will welcome*
1014 *Christ as God at the time of the second coming. (9) We are told that*
1015 *we will worship the Father, Christ and the Holy Spirit in heaven. (10)*
1016 *Adults and children are encouraged to pray to Christ. In light of this*
1017 *evidence, Christ's statement cannot possibly suggest that the Father is*
1018 *the only "true" God and that Christ is not God and inferior.*

1019 • Jeremiah 10:10-11 contrasts between the Creator God and pagan
1020 gods.

1021 *Jeremiah 10:10-11 "But the LORD is the true God, he is the living
1022 God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and
1023 the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. 11 Thus shall ye
1024 say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth,
1025 even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens."

1026 *The phrase "true God," first mentioned in Jeremiah 10:10, defines the*
1027 *"true God" as the Creator God who "hath made the earth by his*
1028 *power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath*

1029 *stretched out the heavens by his discretion,” and contrasts the “true—*
1030 *Creator—God” to the false “gods that have not made the heavens and*
1031 *the earth (Jeremiah 10:11).” The Hebrew word for God in Jeremiah*
1032 *10:10 is “’ēlôhîym,” such as is found in Genesis 1:27, 11:7 and*
1033 *Exodus 20:3.*

1034 *These verses do not say the Father is the “True God” and Christ a*
1035 *false god—absolutely UNTRUE! and blasphemous. Or that the Father*
1036 *is the “only true god,” and Jesus Christ is a lesser entity. Rather these*
1037 *verses compare the true Creator God with pagan gods. Speaking*
1038 *further of this Daniel Bediako states:*

1039 *“In the passages that assert the oneness of God, the contrast is*
1040 *consistently between the God of Israel on the one hand and the gods of*
1041 *Canaanites on the other. The contrast is never between the one-person*
1042 *God and a plurality with that one God. In other words, when the Old*
1043 *Testament asserts the oneness of God, such oneness excludes only*
1044 *false deities, not a plurality of persons within the true God.”²⁸*

1045 *Proof of this fact are the incidences already mentioned where the three*
1046 *are mentioned in the Old Testament.*

1047 • *Thoughts on Christ seeking reinstatement of the glory He shared*
1048 *with His Father prior to the incarnation.*

1049 *In John 12:27-33 Jesus speaks of having come at a particular time—*
1050 *“for this cause came I unto this hour” (John 12:27), for a particular*
1051 *purpose—“now shall the prince of this world be cast out” (John*
1052 *12:31), and asks the Father to “glorify His own name”—the Father’s*
1053 *name. In other words, in coming Jesus emptied Himself of any glory*
1054 *and did not seek to attract attention to Himself.*

1055 *In John 17:1-5, at the end of His ministry, Jesus implores the Father to*
1056 *reinstatement the glory He [Christ] had prior to his humbling Himself and*
1057 *coming to earth: “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy*
1058 *Son also may glorify thee (John 17:1).” In reminding the Father that*
1059 *eternal life comes to those who recognize “the only true God, and*
1060 *Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3),” Jesus is pointing to*
1061 *the casting out of the “prince of this world,” mentioned in John 12:31.*
1062 *Christ concludes by asking that the glory He enjoyed prior to coming*
1063 *to earth would be reinstated: “Glorify thou me with thine own self*
1064 *with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. (John*

28 Daniel Bediako, “God In 3 Persons—In the Old Testament,” Biblical Research Institute, Release 10, 8.

1065 17:5)”

1066 *Far from stating that His Father was the only true God and Himself*
1067 *an inferior being, Jesus is asking for a reinstatement of the same glory*
1068 *He had from the beginning—equal to the Father.²⁹ The NKJV renders*
1069 *it, “O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I*
1070 *had with You before the world was (John 17:3).”*

1071 *Beyond that we should not comment. This falls into the “unsearchable*
1072 *and past finding out” that awaits our discovery in heaven.*

1073 *Remember: “The greatness of God cannot be measured or*
1074 *comprehended. And that doctrine that denies the absolute Godhead of*
1075 *Jesus Christ, denies also the Godhead of the Father; for no man*
1076 *knoweth the Son but the Father.” Signs of the Times, June 27, 1895,*
1077 *par. 3.*

1078 Was Christ the Literal Son of the Father?

1079 Introduction

1080 *An important question to consider is whether Christ as the “Son of*
1081 *God” was the literal flesh and blood descendent of the Father?*

1082 *Lines of evidence include (1) recognizing the limitations of human*
1083 *understanding and language; (2) Christ, as a self-existent member of*
1084 *the Godhead with a life of everlasting to everlasting duration, had no*
1085 *beginning; (3) consider why a self-existent God is referred to as*
1086 *begotten; (4) why an eternal being is referred to as “Son”; (5) the*
1087 *common practice of using filial terms for non-biological relationships*
1088 *in the Hebrew culture; (6) reasons why “begotten” correctly describes*
1089 *Christ; (7) possible understandings of Proverbs 8; and (8) final*
1090 *thoughts on why the Father-Son relationship ideally describes Christ’s*
1091 *relationship to His Father.*

1092 1. Human understanding and language fall short.

1093 *Human language falls short when describing Christ’s relationship to*
1094 *His Father. To characterize Christ as the literal, flesh and blood,*
1095 *descendent of the Father, Son of God, would presuppose a literal*
1096 *heavenly “Mother,” as well as a literal “birth” in the far distant past.*
1097 *I have never heard anyone speak of a heavenly Mother when they*
1098 *speak of Christ as a “literal” Son of God. There is no doubt the Bible*

29 “Here [The Scriptures] we may learn what our redemption has cost the One who was equal with the Father from the beginning” Letter 64, 1909.5.

1099 *refers to Christ as the “Son of God,” but what does that mean exactly*
1100 *if Christ is a self-existent Member of the Godhead, and why is He*
1101 *called the Son of God. Can Christ be called the Son of God without*
1102 *being a literal, flesh and blood Son of God? We would have to agree*
1103 *that our human understanding of birth doesn’t really fit what we know*
1104 *of Christ prior to His incarnation and birth to Mary.*

1105 2. Christ is God—an eternal, self-existent Member of the Godhead.
1106 *If Christ, as one of the eternal, self-existent—life original, unborrowed*
1107 *and underived—members of the Godhead, with a life of “everlasting*
1108 *to everlasting” duration, having the non-communicable attributes of*
1109 *Deity, how can there have been a birth in the distant past when He has*
1110 *always existed? Notice a few verses and quotes affirming key aspects*
1111 *of His Divinity.*

1112 • Christ’s life was of eternal duration.

1113 Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the
1114 government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called
1115 Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The
1116 Prince of Peace.”

1117 *Micah 5:2 “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little
1118 among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto
1119 me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of
1120 old, from everlasting.”

1121 *John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,
1122 Before Abraham was, I am.”

1123 *Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with
1124 God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore. *Review and*
1125 *Herald*, April 5, 1906, par. 6.

1126 Christ is declared in the Scriptures to be the Son of God. From all
1127 eternity He has sustained this relation to Jehovah. Manuscript 22,
1128 1905.4.

1129 As noted in the earlier addendum on Christ’s eternal life, Ellen White
1130 used many phrases to describe the everlasting to everlasting duration
1131 of His life: “from all eternity,” “from eternity,” “existed from eternity,”
1132 “from eternal ages,” “from the beginning,” “never was a time,”
1133 “everliving,” “Eternal Presence,” “Eternal Word,” “Everlasting
1134 Father,” “Eternal Son of God,” “Eternal Godhead,” “Eternal Wisdom,”
1135 “eternal throne,” “everlasting throne,” “from everlasting,” “from
1136 everlasting to everlasting,” “set up from everlasting,” “A life

1137 unreckoned by human computation or measured by figures,” “never a
1138 time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God,” “in
1139 the presence of the Father from the beginning,” “who from the
1140 beginning was equal with the Father,” “Never-ending life that existed
1141 before the worlds were made,” “familiarity and ease of eternal
1142 habitude,” “One of the eternal dignitaries” and “uncreated Lord” to
1143 establish the “everlasting to everlasting” limitless nature of His
1144 existence.

1145 • Christ is self-existent.

1146 *As a self-existent Deity, Christ did not depend on any other entity to*
1147 *exist. His life was original, unborrowed and underived. It goes without*
1148 *saying, a self-existent deity requires no birth!*

1149 John 1:4 “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”

1150 John 2:19 “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple,
1151 and in three days I will raise it up.”

1152 *John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,
1153 Before Abraham was, I am.”

1154 "In Jesus is our life derived. In Him is life that is original,
1155 unborrowed, underived life. In us there is a streamlet from the
1156 fountain of life. In Him is the fountain of life." Lt309-1905.7.

1157 "With solemn dignity Jesus answered, “Verily, verily, I say unto you,
1158 Before Abraham was, I AM.” *Desire of Ages*, 469.4. Silence fell upon
1159 the vast assembly. The name of God, given to Moses to express the
1160 idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this
1161 Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent
1162 One, He who had been promised to Israel, “whose goings forth have
1163 been from of old, from the days of eternity.” Micah 5:2, margin.
1164 *Desire of Ages*, 469.5.

1165 • Christ is also preexistent.

1166 *The same can be said for Christ’s preexistence. He always existed.*
1167 *Therefore, speaking of a time when He was born makes no sense.*

1168 John 1:1-2 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with
1169 God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with
1170 God.”

1171 Revelation 19:13 "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood:
1172 and his name is called The Word of God."

1173 Colossians 1:17 “And he is before all things....”

1174 "He is the faithful and true Witness, "the beginning of the creation of
1175 God," whose throne is of old, from everlasting. Behold Him, the
1176 mighty, uncreated Lord, the all-glorious Redeemer." Letter 185,
1177 1901.9.

1178 "When Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple, he was only an
1179 infant of a few weeks. But he *was also the Ancient of days*, (emphasis
1180 added) whose goings forth have been from of old, even from
1181 everlasting. He was indeed the long-expected Messiah, of whom the
1182 Jews had read, "The Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to his
1183 temple." To the Pharisees Christ afterward declared, "Before Abraham
1184 was, I am." He is the head of an unchangeable priesthood, the only
1185 true high priest over the house of God." Manuscript 104, 1900.10.

1186 "But while God's Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon
1187 this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding his pre-existence. The
1188 Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in
1189 union and oneness with his Father. From everlasting he was the
1190 Mediator of the covenant.... *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906, par. 5.

1191 "The world was made by him, "and without him was not anything
1192 made that was made." If Christ made all things, he existed before all
1193 things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one
1194 need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest
1195 sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed
1196 forevermore." *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906, par. 6.

1197 3. If Christ is a self-existent and eternal God, why does the Bible refer
1198 to Him as begotten?

1199 *There is much mystery when we come to the essence of God, but this is*
1200 *an important question. In this regard, Jesus maintained a large*
1201 *reserve and the Bible is largely silent.*³⁰ We will as well.

1202 • John 3:16 and "only begotten" [*monogenēs*].

1203 *As explained below, a word was added to John 3:16 in the Latin*
1204 *Vulgate, which eventually was added to the King James Version. A*
1205 *more correct rendering is found in other translations. Notice the*
1206 *following examples:*

1207 John 3:16 (NIV) "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and

30 "In regard to entering into the subject of the divine mystery of the essence of God, Christ ever maintained a wise reserve." Manuscript 45, 1900.10. "In regard to the personality and prerogatives of God, where He is, and what He is, this is a subject which we are not to dare to touch. On this theme silence is eloquence." Manuscript 132, 1903.31.

1208 only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have
1209 eternal life.”

1210 John 3:16 (RSV) “For God so loved the world that he gave his only
1211 Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal
1212 life.”

1213 • Notice Abraham offered up an “only begotten” son, even though he
1214 had two sons.

1215 Hebrews 11:17 “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up
1216 Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only
1217 begotten son”

1218 • John speaks of believers being born in 1John 1:13, but speaks of
1219 Jesus being a unique one of a kind son in 1John 1:15.

1220 John 1:12 and 14 “But as many as received him, to them gave he
1221 power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his
1222 name: Which were born (*gennaō*=to procreate (properly, of the father,
1223 but by extension of the mother); figuratively, *to regenerate*:—*bear*,
1224 *beget*, *be born*, *bring forth*, *conceive* (emphasis added), be delivered
1225 of, gender, make, spring.), not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,
1226 nor of the will of man, but of God. ... 14 And the Word was made
1227 flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of
1228 the only begotten (*monogenēs*=*single of its kind, only used of only*
1229 *sons or daughters* (emphasis added) (viewed in relation to their
1230 parents) used of Christ, denotes the only begotten son of God) of the
1231 Father,) full of grace and truth.”

1232 - Notice what the SDA Bible Commentary states regarding John 3:16:
1233 “The only begotten. Gr. *monogenēs*, from two words meaning “only”
1234 and “kind,” and thus properly translated “unique,” “only,” “only one
1235 of a kind.” As with the title Logos (see on v. 1), only John uses the
1236 word *monogenēs* of Christ (see John 1:18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9).
1237 Absence of the definite article in the Greek either makes *monogenēs*
1238 indefinite, “an only one,” or makes it an expression of quality, in
1239 which case John would be saying, “glory as of an only one [who had
1240 come] from beside the Father.” This seems evidently the sense here.
1241 See on Luke 7:12; 8:42, where *monogenēs* is translated “only.” In
1242 Heb. 11:17 *monogenēs* is used of Isaac, who was by no means
1243 Abraham’s “only begotten,” or even his first-born. But he was the son
1244 of the promise, and as such, the one destined to succeed his father as
1245 heir to the birthright (Gen. 25:1–6; Gal. 4:22, 23). “Similarly in

1246 respect to the five texts in John’s writings of Christ, the translation
1247 should be one of the following: ‘unique,’ ‘precious,’ ‘only,’ ‘sole,’ ‘the
1248 only one of his kind,’ but not ‘only begotten’” (Problems in Bible
1249 Translation, p. 198). The translation “only begotten,” here and
1250 elsewhere, apparently originated with the early Fathers of the Catholic
1251 Church, and entered early English translations of the Bible under the
1252 influence of the Latin Vulgate, the official Bible of the Catholic
1253 Church. Accurately reflecting the Greek, various Old Latin
1254 manuscripts which antedate the Vulgate read “only” rather than “only
1255 begotten.” ... The idea that Christ was “begotten” by the Father at
1256 some time in eternity past is altogether foreign to the Scriptures....
1257 Properly understood of Christ’s unique status as the Son of God, the
1258 word *monogenēs* distinguishes between Him and all others who,
1259 through faith in Him, are given “power to become the sons of God” (v.
1260 12), and who are specifically declared to be “born ... of God” (v. 13).
1261 Christ is, and always has been, very “God” (see on v. 1), and by virtue
1262 of this fact we “become the sons of God” when we receive Christ and
1263 believe on His name.” — SDA Bible Commentary, ([https://
1264 /archive.org/stream/SdaBibleCommentary1980/
1265 SdaBc-5%20%2843%29%20John_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/SdaBibleCommentary1980/SdaBc-5%20%2843%29%20John_djvu.txt), accessed May 30, 2022).

1266 - The following explanation was found on the Biblical Research
1267 Institute website:

1268 "Christ as God’s *Monogenēs*: When the term is used to describe Jesus,
1269 it simply means “unique,” or “one and only.” It describes the
1270 uniqueness of His nature: “We have seen his glory, the glory of the
1271 One and Only, ... full of grace and truth” (John 1:14, NIV). There is no
1272 other like Him in that He came from the Father and possesses the
1273 glory of the Father. John 1:18 is particularly difficult because the
1274 manuscripts provide at least two different textual variants. Some argue
1275 that the original text reads “only Son” and others that the original is
1276 “only God.” If one accepts “only God,” then *monogenēs* could refer to
1277 the uniqueness of Christ as God and as God’s means of revelation (cf.
1278 verse 14). If we accept the reading “only Son,” His uniqueness as a
1279 revealer of the Father would be emphasized. *Monogenēs* also
1280 identifies Jesus as the only and unique means of salvation. John wrote,
1281 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that
1282 whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John
1283 3:16, NIV). The relationship between Christ and the Father is unique:
1284 He is God’s one and only Son, and He is God’s only means of
1285 salvation. The same is found in 1 John 4:9, where John wrote that the

1286 Father loved us and sent “his one and only [*monogenēs*] Son into the
1287 world that we might live through him” (NIV). God gave us the most
1288 precious gift He had, His only and unique Son to redeem us. Based on
1289 the root meaning of the term and the context in which it is used, one
1290 could suggest that the most probable translation is “unique, one and
1291 only.”³¹

1292 • Mrs. White speaks of Christ’s incarnational begetting.
1293 “Christ brought men and women power to overcome. He came to this
1294 world in human form, to live a man among men. He assumed the
1295 liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He
1296 was a partaker of the divine nature. *In His incarnation he gained in a*
1297 *new sense the title of the Son of God* (emphasis added). Said the angel
1298 to Mary, “The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore
1299 also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of
1300 God.” *While the son of a human being, Christ became the Son of God*
1301 *in a new* (emphasis added). Thus He stood in our world—the Son of
1302 God, yet allying Himself by birth to the human race.” Manuscript 22,
1303 1905.5.

1304 Sonship quotes of Mrs. White

1305 *There are no quotes that speak of the essence of His birth, apart from*
1306 *his conception through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit with*
1307 *Mary. That said, even that information is sparse. However, she clearly*
1308 *states that He has sustained the relationship of Son to the Father from*
1309 *all eternity — the key phrase being from all eternity! Such a statement*
1310 *negates the idea of a birth in the far distant past. She additionally*
1311 *states that the title "Son of God" took on new meaning at that time of*
1312 *incarnation, since at that time He was truly the "Son" of God as a*
1313 *result of the Holy Spirit’s (Deity) role of conceiving Jesus in Mary*
1314 *(Human). Mrs. White also compares that incarnational birth to the*
1315 *creation of the angels and the adoption of the sons of men. The latter*
1316 *statement is sometimes used in attempts to establish a birth in the far*
1317 *distant past, which we have already determined could not be.*

1318 • The Scriptures also speak of a begetting fulfilled at the time of the
1319 resurrection.

1320 Psalms 2:7 “I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me,
1321 Thou art my Son; *this day have I begotten thee.* (emphasis added)”

31 (<https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/john-316/>, accessed June 30, 2021).

1322 Acts 13:33 “God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that
1323 he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm,
1324 *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*” (emphasis added).

1325 Hebrews 1:5 “For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou
1326 art my Son, this day have I begotten [gennaō] thee? And again, *I will*
1327 *be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son* (emphasis added)?”

1328 *When were these Scriptures fulfilled? At the time of the resurrection.*

1329 Romans 1:4 “And declared to be the Son of God with power,
1330 according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”

1331 Revelation 1:5 “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness,
1332 and the first begotten of the dead,”

1333 4. Many instructive titles were used to describe Christ.

1334 *The term “Son of God” is one of many titles used by Christ to explain*
1335 *various aspects of His relationship to human beings. The title Son of*
1336 *man (used more than 100 times in the Gospels; Matthew 8:19-20); I*
1337 *Am (Christ also used this name in the Old Testament; John 8:58-59;*
1338 *Exodus 6:3); The Bread of Life (John 6:35); The Resurrection and the*
1339 *Life (John 11:25); I am the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6); The*
1340 *Bridegroom (Matthew 9:15); The Gate (John 10:7,9); Good Shepherd*
1341 *(John 10:14-15); Light of the World (John 8:12); Lord/Teacher (John*
1342 *13:14-15); Messiah/Christ (John 4:25-26); The Vine (John 15:5); The*
1343 *First and the Last (Rev. 1:17); Living One (Rev. 1:18); The Bright and*
1344 *Morning Star (Rev. 22:16).*

1345 *The title “Son of God,” one of the most meaning-filled titles of Christ,*
1346 *reflects Christ’s submissive relationship to His Father. There is much*
1347 *mystery here and the Bible is silent on how this submission-in-a-*
1348 *relationship-of-equals developed, and what that submission meant on*
1349 *a practical basis. You will find a most interesting and helpful article*
1350 *on this topic in the SDA Commentary.³²*

1351 5. Semitic cultures often used filial terms to describe non-biological
1352 relationships.

1353 *Hebrew and other Semitic cultures used filial terms —Father, Son,*
1354 *daughter for example — for non-biological relationships. Examples of*
1355 *this are found in the following Scriptures:*

32 “Son of God,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, Gospel of Luke, (https://archive.org/stream/SdaBibleCommentary1980/SdaBc-5%20%2842%29%20Luke_djvu.txt, accessed May 31, 2022).

1356 1 Samuel 3:6 "And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel
1357 arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And
1358 he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again."

1359 1 Samuel 4:16 "And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of
1360 the army, and I fled to day out of the army. And he said, What is there
1361 done, my son?"

1362 1 Samuel 24:16 "And it came to pass, when David had made an end of
1363 speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my
1364 son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept."

1365 2 Kings 2:12 "And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father,
1366 the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no
1367 more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two
1368 pieces."

1369 2 Kings 13:14 "Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he
1370 died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over
1371 his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the
1372 horsemen thereof."

1373 Matthew 9:22 "But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he
1374 said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.
1375 And the woman was made whole from that hour."

1376 Paul Petersen explains;

1377 "In Semitic languages the terms "Son" and "Father" are used in a
1378 wider sense than is common in most Western languages. A son can be
1379 what we call a son of flesh and blood, identified by DNA, but it can
1380 also refer to a descendant. Son can indicate a student, as in "sons of
1381 the prophets" (2 King 2:3), or the son in Proverbs 1:8 and other
1382 wisdom literature. Furthermore, "son" can be used in reference to a
1383 successor in an office, for example, Belshazzar as the king of Babylon
1384 referred to his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, as his "father" (Dan
1385 5:18). Basically, a "son" is a representative, most clearly exemplified
1386 by the term "sons of God" (Job 1:6; 2:1)"³³

1387 Notice the following helpful thoughts from an article in the
1388 International Journal of Frontier Missiology, on translating filial terms
1389 in the Bible:

1390 "The Bible often uses social familial terms for fathers and sons that do

33 Paul Petersen, "God in 3 Persons—In The New Testament," Biblical Research Institute, Release 11.

1391 not specify whether their relationship is biological or not. In English,
1392 the relational noun son signifies a filial relation with someone of any
1393 kind, whether it is the result of biological procreation or not. So a
1394 person can become a “son” to someone on the basis of procreation,
1395 adoption, marriage, or upbringing (a so-called “son of the family”). ...
1396 It is important to realize that to express divine familial relationships,
1397 the Bible uses Greek and Hebrew social familial terms that do not
1398 necessarily demand biological meanings. It presents God’s fatherhood
1399 of us in terms of his inclusion of us in his family and in his paternal
1400 care for us as his loved ones rather than in terms of siring us as
1401 biological offspring. In regard to sonship to God, the New Testament
1402 uses four different Greek familial terms for Jesus, and two for
1403 believers, all of which are terms for social sonship, so none of them
1404 imply that sons of God must be his biological offspring. Instead the
1405 terms allow for the different kinds of generation presented in the
1406 Bible. ... Many speakers of English have little familiarity with
1407 linguistic diversity, and this leads them to mistakenly assume that their
1408 English words and phrases must have look-alike counterparts in other
1409 languages, with the same meanings and the same frequencies of usage;
1410 they then assume that if an expression looks different in another
1411 language it must have a different meaning from the English. As a
1412 result, when they see literal back-translations into English of
1413 expressions used in a language different from English, they are
1414 disturbed when these differ from the expressions in their English
1415 Bible. The fact, however, is that there are usually semantic
1416 mismatches between many of the words in any two languages,
1417 especially if they are from different language families and different
1418 cultures, and translators often have to use phrases in the target
1419 language to express the intended meaning of a single- word term in the
1420 Greek or Hebrew text.”³⁴

1421 6. What about a possible birth in Proverbs 8?

1422 Proverbs 8:24-25 “When there were no depths, I was brought forth;
1423 when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the
1424 mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth.”

1425 *Attempts are sometimes made to establish a birth in the far distant*
1426 *past on the basis of Proverbs 8. Textual evidence suggests otherwise.*

34 Rick Brown, Leith Gray, Andrea Gray, “A New Look at Translating Familial Biblical Terms,” *International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, July-September, 2011, vol. 28:3, (Pasadena, CA: International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions), 105-120.

1427 - A painful birth.

1428 *Eugene Prewitt points out in his excellent article on the Godhead that*
1429 *the word purported to refer to a birth—hûl, speaks of a painful birth,*
1430 *which would apparently put such a birth, if that were the case, after*
1431 *the fall of man:*

1432 “First, the Hebrew word “khood” doesn’t mean “give birth.” Rather, it
1433 means “to twist or twirl” or to “writhe.” It is the latter meaning that
1434 lends itself to the pain involved in child bearing. The word also has a
1435 figurative meaning, “to wait.” And that is how it is used first in
1436 scripture. Khood is rendered “stayed” in [Gen. 8:10]. A little more
1437 study convinced me that writhing in pain could not describe any birth
1438 prior to the curse, for that is when pain became part of birth.”³⁵

1439 - Installation into a new mediatorial role.

1440 *Further evidence from a careful study by Dr. Richard Davidson*
1441 *suggests that Proverbs 8, which speaks of, the wisdom of YHWH, co-*
1442 *creatorship of the earth, and the joy found in working with that*
1443 *creation, actually speaks of the installation of Christ into the new role.*

1444 “According to Prov 8, at the beginning of creation, we find a situation
1445 of equal members of the Godhead. Presumably by mutual consent, one
1446 Person of the Godhead is “installed”... in a work of Mediator. While
1447 the Person we call the Father continued to represent the transcendent
1448 nature of the Godhead, the Person we know as the Son condescended
1449 to represent the immanent aspect of divinity, coming close to His
1450 creation, mediating between infinity and finitude, even before sin.
1451 This is not a subordination of the Son to the Father, but a voluntary
1452 condescension to be installed into a mediatorial work, representing the
1453 divine love in an immanent way to his inhabited universe.”³⁶

1454 - Ellen White on Proverbs 8:2

1455 *Ellen White, when quoting Proverbs 8, references the sections dealing*
1456 *with the everlasting duration of Christ's life, in the next quotation from*
1457 *1900.*

1458 “Before Abraham was, I am.” *Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent*

35 Eugene Prewitt, Godhead (<https://bibledoc.org/contra-men-and-movements/the-godhead-for-john/>, accessed May 31, 2022).

36 Richard Davidson, “Proverbs 8 and the Place of Christ,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 17/1 (Spring 2006): 1-3. (Collegedale, TN: Adventist Theological Society, 2006), 33-54). Also Richard Davidson, “The Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Pentateuch” (2016) <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs/862>. Faculty Publications. 862.

1459 *Son of God (emphasis added).* The message He gave to Moses to give
1460 to the children of Israel was, “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of
1461 Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” The prophet Micah writes of
1462 Him, “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, tho thou be little among the
1463 thousands of Judah, yet out of Thee shall He come forth unto Me that
1464 is to be ruler in Israel; *whose goings forth have been from of old, from*
1465 *everlasting (emphasis added).*” White, *Signs of the Times*, August 29,
1466 1900, par. 13. ... *In speaking of His pre-existence, Christ carries the*
1467 *mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a*
1468 *time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God*
1469 *(emphasis added).* He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had
1470 been with God as one brought up with Him.” *Signs of the Times*,
1471 August 29, 1900, par. 13, 15

1472 7. Why was the title “Son of God” used by the Father to affirm Christ
1473 who was a member of the eternal Godhead?

1474 *How an eternal, self-existent person comes to be called “Son” is a*
1475 *mystery. The bible is silent on the topic. However, the role of a godly*
1476 *father in relationship with a child gives one of the best illustrations of*
1477 *the kind of relationship that God wants to have with His human*
1478 *children. Sonship provides an illustration of the Father’s ongoing*
1479 *guidance, providing and keeping; to be reciprocated with surrender,*
1480 *ongoing trust and following—a relationship especially demonstrated*
1481 *in the lives of Christ and Enoch.*

1482 Concluding Christ’s Sonship

1483 *In conclusion, because Christ is one of the self-existent members of the*
1484 *Godhead, with a life of everlasting to everlasting duration, there could*
1485 *have been no birth in the far distant past. A begetting experience*
1486 *occurred, however, at the time of the incarnation when Christ became*
1487 *the “Son of God” and the “Son of Man” in a new sense, as well as at*
1488 *the time of the resurrection. Aside from the Hebrew culture’s proclivity*
1489 *to use filial terms for non-biological relationships, we can only*
1490 *speculate as to why and when an eternal member of the Godhead*
1491 *came to be called a Son. Like other matters of the Godhead, it is a*
1492 *mystery on which the the Bible is silent..*

1493 *Accordingly we affirm Christ’s “absolute” Godhead,³⁷ acknowledge*

37 “Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” This is the absolute Godhead. The mightiest created intellect cannot comprehend Him; words from the most eloquent tongue fail to describe Him. Silence is eloquence. Manuscript 128,

1494 *His self-existence and everlasting to everlasting life, rejoice in the love*
1495 *of His Father and our Heavenly Father, learn about how to be godly*
1496 *sons of God in looking at His Sonship, he all while still recognizing*
1497 *His place as one of three Members of the Godhead.*

1498 *Reviewing & Final Thoughts*

1499 **Reviewing**

1500 **The First Study: The Father**

1501 *In the first study of this series of Bible Studies on the Godhead, We*
1502 *considered the Godhead of the Father, noting particularly the su-*
1503 *pernatural experience that is constantly going on around us, of which*
1504 *we understand little. But when it comes to knowing the one who con-*
1505 *ceived, designed and then created planet earth, we know even less.*
1506 *That said, there is overwhelming evidence to believe in a supernatural*
1507 *designer and creator. We also noted that all communication from*
1508 *heaven with humankind was taken over by Christ after the fall, result-*
1509 *ing in His presence in many narratives of the Old Testament.*

1510 **The Second Study: Christ**

1511 *In the second study on the Godhead of Christ, we looked at a variety*
1512 *of lines of evidence that overwhelmingly confirmed that Christ was the*
1513 *eternal, self-existent, co-equal, divine Person, Savior and God. Among*
1514 *the lines of evidence were his being known and referred to as God, the*
1515 *prophecies pointing to His incarnation and ministry, the supernatural*
1516 *nature of His birth and other events connected with it, the many mira-*
1517 *cles performed, the power given to others to do miracles, His numer-*
1518 *ous claims of His Godhead—coming from heaven, knowing the Father,*
1519 *coming in His own glory, etc—and assurances that only a God could*
1520 *give, to say nothing of His allowing many people to worship Him and*
1521 *His being greeted as God at the time of the second coming.*

1522 **Second Study Addendum: Eternal Duration of Christ's Life**

1523 *In this addendum to the study on Christ, we looked at the Scriptures*
1524 *and Ellen White quotations having to do with the eternal, everlasting*
1525 *to everlasting duration of Christ's life.*

1526 **The Third Study: The Holy Spirit**

1527 *In the third part of the study, we considered evidence for the Holy*
1528 *Spirit being Christ's Representative, Successor, a distinct Person, and*
1529 *member of the Godhead. We looked at the the non-communicable*
1530 *attributes—self-existence, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipres-*
1531 *ence—of the Holy Spirit, the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in*
1532 *the Old Testament, the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the*
1533 *life of Christ, the teachings and promises of Christ regarding the Holy*
1534 *Spirit as a distinct and independent Person that would bring power*
1535 *and boldness to the early believers, the Holy Spirit's role as Represen-*
1536 *tative, Successor and Comforter after Christ ascended to Heaven, the*
1537 *fulfilment of those promises on the Day of Pentecost, the ongoing*
1538 *leadership and activity of the Holy Spirit in the Early Church, the*
1539 *recognition of the Holy Spirit as a Person and God by the early believ-*
1540 *ers, multitudinous manifestations attesting to the Personhood of the*
1541 *Holy Spirit, similar multitudinous manifestations attesting to His Dei-*
1542 *ty, the many marvelous "Three" quotations that place the Holy Spirit*
1543 *on equal footing with the other Persons of the Godhead—abundant*
1544 *clear statements that are unequivocal on the Holy Spirit being one of*
1545 *the Three, and some thoughts on the mistaken assertions that the Holy*
1546 *Spirit is only a spiritual manifestation and third personification of*
1547 *power in spite of overwhelming evidence otherwise.*

1548 The Fourth Study: Three Persons - One God

1549 *In this fourth "Three Person" part of the Bible study, further confir-*
1550 *mation was given of three distinct Divine Persons, through verses*
1551 *compiled where the Three are listed together in the Old Testament, the*
1552 *New Testament, and a longer topical list of "Three" statements in the*
1553 *writings of Ellen White. Consideration was also given to Deuteronomy*
1554 *6:4 and the "LORD our God, the LORD is one." We discovered that*
1555 *the "Three" and the "One" are fully compatible, the Scriptures teach-*
1556 *ing the mysterious, but blessed "one God" "Three Persons" paradox.*
1557 *Important information was provided establishing that 'echâd was a*
1558 *unitary one rather than a mathematical one such as yâchîyd. Accord-*
1559 *ingly, though the Scriptures correctly speak of one God in various*
1560 *places, the designation does not negate the three distinct Persons that*
1561 *have been studied in earlier portions of this series of studies. Attention*
1562 *was directed to the essential nature of the Godhead, including loving*
1563 *relationships within the Godhead, perfect and complete unity between*
1564 *the Persons of the Godhead, diversity—individuality and personality—*
1565 *within that unity, humility, and submission in relationships of equals—*
1566 *instructing on the proper representation of God through loving rela-*

1567 *tionships, unity, diversity, humility and appropriate submission. Time*
1568 *was also given to the question of the “True God,” articulated in the*
1569 *course of Christ’s prayer to His Father in John 17. Having clearly es-*
1570 *tablished Christ’s Godhead, rather than being a statement of a lessor*
1571 *position, Christ was seeking to be fully reinstated to the position He*
1572 *had shared with His Father from the beginning.*

1573 Final Study: Is Christ the Literal Flesh and Blood Son of the Father?

1574 *Before concluding we also considered the question of the Sonship of*
1575 *Christ, determining that humans are unable to understand how a self-*
1576 *existent member of the Godhead, with a life of everlasting to everlast-*
1577 *ing duration and fully God, came to be called a Son. However our in-*
1578 *ability to understand does not preclude our loving, and relating to,*
1579 *Christ as the Son of God, loving His Father as our Heavenly Father,*
1580 *reveling in what we learn about the relationship our Heavenly Father*
1581 *wants to have with us as we learn about Christ’s relationship of trust*
1582 *and submission to His Father, all the while continuing to recognize*
1583 *Christ’s place as one of three self-existent Persons of the Godhead*
1584 *who never had a birth in the far distant past.*

1585 Final thoughts

1586 Be careful who you listen to.

1587 1 John 2:22 “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?
1588 He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”

1589 Honor the Son.

1590 John 5:23 “That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour
1591 the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father
1592 which hath sent him.”

1593 “The greatness of God cannot be measured or comprehended. And that
1594 doctrine that denies the absolute Godhead of Jesus Christ, denies also
1595 the Godhead of the Father; for no man knoweth the Son but the Fa-
1596 ther.” *Signs of the Times*, June 27, 1895, par. 3

1597 Do not blaspheme against the Holy Spirit.

1598 Mark 3:28-29 (NKJV) “Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiv-
1599 en the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; 29 but
1600 he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but
1601 is subject to eternal condemnation”

1602 Avoid controversy.

1603 Titus 3:9 “But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and con-
1604 tentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and
1605 vain.”

1606 Look forward to a glorious future that will include worshipping the
1607 three Persons of the Godhead.

1608 “As the saints in the kingdom of God are accepted in the beloved, they
1609 hear: “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared
1610 for you from the foundation of the world.” [Matthew 25:34.] And then
1611 the golden harps are touched, and the music flows all through the
1612 heavenly host, and they fall down and worship the Father and the Son
1613 and the Holy Spirit. And then what? What next did I see? One meets
1614 another; and they say, as they fall right upon their necks with their
1615 faces shining with the glory of God, ‘It was you, it was you that
1616 brought the truth to me, and I would not hear it at first, but, O I am so
1617 glad.’” Manuscript 139, 1906.32.

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